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15

Anne A. Downie

VERSE AND PROSE

VERSE AND PROSE

VERSE AND PROSE

GRAVE AND GAY

BY GEORGE CUNNINGHAM

("PATE M'PHUN")

KILMARNOCK

DUNLOP & DRENNAN, "STANDARD" OFFICE

1903

To the frien's o' my boyhood,
Wha leev't at the Raw;
And the mem'ry o' the auld folk,
Noo deid and awa'.

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PART I.

HUMOROUS VERSE.

BIRTHDAY REJOICINGS.

From the old castle turrets,
  O'ertopping the trees,
Gay pennons are streaming
  Aloft in the breeze.

The woods are resounding
  With laughter and song:
And Music's soft cadence
  Comes floating along.

On the wings of the morning
  It rises and swells,
'Midst the belching of cannon,
  And clangour of bells.

It is night. The lights
  Are ablaze in the hall;
The ladies and knights
  Are assembling all.

The gong has resounded;
  The feast has begun—
The great birthday feast
  Of the Baron M'Phun.

The massive oak table
  Is groaning beneath
Huge haunches of venison,
  Mutton, and beef;

Grouse, salmon, and turtle;
  Veal, rabbit, and quail;
And large, foaming flagons
  Of berry-brown ale.

The steam from the viands
  Is rising in clouds,
And wreathing the guests
  In its thin, misty shrouds.

There is rattling of cutlery,
  Clattering of ware;
And smacking of chops
  O'er the succulent fare.

There are beards and moustachios
  All dripping with grease;
And cries of "A little
  More seasoning, please!"

There is stretching of arms;
  There is bending of backs;
And loos'ning of waistbands
  For fresher attacks.

Till time, with an appetite
  Greater than they,
Steps in. Then, alas!
  There's an end to the fray.

Now the Baron got up,
  And surveying the crowd,
In the voice of a stentor,
  Thundered aloud:

"What ho! my brave vassals,
  Bring quickly, I say,
Your choicest old Sack
  And Canary. Away!"

Then, quick to the summons,
  A lady appears—
A once comely lady,
  Grown wrinkled with years,

Crying, "There's your old *sack*, sir;
  But, by the Long Harry,
The cat's made a meal
  O' your choicest *canary*!"

COME INTO THE GARDEN, LOVE.

Come into the garden, love,
  Where flowers sweetly bloom.
We'll feast our little noses
  On the roses' sweet perfume.

We'll hunt the little busy bee,
  And track him to his lair;
Then wrest from him his luscious spoils,
  That we may nobly fare.

We'll watch the little butterfly,
  So joyous and free,
As it dances in the sunshine,
  To the music of the bee.

We'll lightly laugh, and gaily quaff
  The wine of loving words;
And drink the liquid melody
  Decanted by the birds.

Then come into the garden, do,
  My dearest Polly Skinner.
We'll cull a little cabbage stock,
  And boil it for our dinner.

A FISHER OF MEN.

The muckle deil,
  Wi' rod and reel,
Gae'd oot to fish, ae day,
  In the water o' life,
  Whaur sin and strife
Made men an easy prey.
  He baited his heuk
  Wi' the sacred Beuk,
But deil a nibble he gat;
  Nor catched a fin,
  Excepting ane,
A wee bit worthless sprat
  O' a greedy gled,
  Wi' back weel cled,
And wame weel lined and crammed.

"'Tis a saunt," quo' he,
As his reel played flee,
"No, a sinner again, be d——,
A worthless cheat
O' a hypocrite,
As black as sin itsel';
Wha's canting face
Wad bring disgrace
On a decent place like H——."

Upon his heel
He turned, the deil,
Or rayther on his cloot;
He wheeled him roun',
And sitting doon
Upon an auld tree root,
Quo' he, "I think
I'll try the clink;
It ocht to tak' the crowd."
Sae he slily stuck,
Upon his heuk,
A guinea of brichtest gowd.
At the very first throw
The deil cried "Oh!
A shark, as shuir as fate;
Jist wait a bit,
I'll land him yet;
Ah—I've lost my bait,"
He suddenly cried.
When lo! he spied
A queer fish lukin' up.

"Gudeman," quo' he,
And winked his e'e,
"You've lost the taw o' your whup."
"Oho, my freen,
It's you that's been
And played me sic a prank;
But, Horney fair,
I'll nab ye there
Afore ye reach the bank."

Again he plied
His bait, and tried
To catch the theiving loon,
But, never mair,
Saw hilt nor hair
O' him ayther up or doon.
"It's like," quo Nick,
"A lawyer's trick,
They're up to every quirk;
In ilka hole,
And corner droll
Unseen they prowl and lurk;
Aye ready to grab,
Wi' greedy gab,
At the bonnie gowden fee.
But, deil may care,
He'll never mair,
Come Paddy over me.
I'll hover-a-blink,
And think, and think."
Sae lifting up his cloot,

He clawed his croon
By bending roun'
Like onie ither brute.

At length, quo' he,
Wi' fiendish glee,
"I'll try the worm a spell."
He did—and stuck,
Upon his heuk,
The worm o' a whisky stell.
He threw it in,
And, very sune,
A dizzen he had o' kills,
Teetotallers a',
Baith thin and sma',
And white aboot the gills.
The sport was guid,
The water in tidd,
And fish were ocht but blate;
Baith big and wee,
In social glee,
Cam' snowkin' roun' his bait—
The young, the auld;
The blythe, the bauld;
The aged and infirm,
A' shed their scales,
And drank like whales
At the sign o' the Devil's worm.
Till, getting fu',
The scaly crew
Threw a' reserve aside;

Then tint their wuts,
Turned up their guts
And floated wi' the tide.
To be rakit in,
Ere a' was dune,
And stowed within his creel;
The fate o' a',
Baith great and sma',
Wha trifle wi' the Deil.

At last he thocht
(As Devils ocht,
At orra times, to think)
Upon his sins,
His blackest anes
Connected wi' the drink.
"Indeed," quo' he,
"I'm wae to see
The havoc and disgrace
I've brocht aboot,
Withoot a doot,
Upon the human race.
I'll gie my aith,
I've been the death
O' mair than tongue can tell;
Wi' the worm alane
I've thoosan's slain
In Scotland here itsel'.
But duty I fin'
It maun be dune
By deils as weel as men;

Wha kill and slay
For hire and pay—
A shilling a day, ye ken."

To reckon his spoil,
The Devil awhile
Sat doon upon a stump;
When as big a fish
As ane could wish,
Abune the water played—plump.
"By cloot," he cries,
"Why here's a prize,
Twa hunner pun' at least;
A big divine,
I ken him fine,
A Roman Catholic priest."
He tried the drink,
The gowden clink,
A Bible, and a goon
O' glossy silk
Or satin whilk
Had cost him monie a croon.
But he held aloof,
And still was proof
Against a' earthly trash.
"At last," quo' Nick,
"I ken a trick
Will settle the beggar's hash."

Sae here he stuck
Upon his heuk
A leddy fresh and fair;

Wi' flounce and frill,
Gat up to kill,
And slipped her in wi' care.
He waited a spell,
When, lo, a yell,
A skreigh o' wild despair;
And the leddy fine,
And the big divine
Cam' whizzing thro' the air;
They landed baith,
As white as death,
Amang the nettles rank
And blatter bleds,
That growe in beds,
Alang the water bank.

"It's noo at last
I've gat him fast,
And safe within my grup;
I'll doon the gate
Before it's late,
Or ere the mune gets up."
Sae up he sprung
At last, and swung
His creel across his hip;
And ower the dam,
The road he cam',
And doon the water lip
He merrily gae'd,
Then turning, said—
"A leddy was jist the caird

I played langsyne,
When I hae min',
In Eden's bonnie yaird."

CHRISTMAS EVE.

On Christmas Eve, when little folk
Were hanging up their stockings,
And slipping quietly off to bed,
Old Santa Claus invoking,

I muttered, "Why not hang up mine,
And add one to the number?"
I did—then tumbled into bed,
And soon was wrapped in slumber.

Next morning, when the milkman came
A rapping at the door,
We bounded from our cosy cribs,
Our stockings to explore.

One found in his a barking dog,
And one a purple monkey;
While others found a jumping frog,
A camel, and a donkey.

One found a great big picture-book,
And one a speaking doll.
Now, guess you what I found in mine—
I found a great big hole.

MODERN COURTSHIP.

Ere night had donned her sable cloak,
  At twilight's gentle calm,
When feline primma-donnas meet,
  To sing their evening psalm,

Upon a verdant mossy bank,
  By Irvine's classic stream,
A maiden fair and gushing youth
  Sat wrapped in love's young dream.

The scion of a noble race
  Of city swells was he,
Who long had led the fashions
  In polite society.

The maiden boasted countless charms,
  Which, reckoned at the most,
Had cost her half-a-crown per charm,
  Transmitted free by post.

He gazed a while in silence on
  That form of matchless mould;
And tried to still his beating heart;
  Tho' love had made him bold.

He took her hand, and with a grace
  That would have shamed Beau Nash,
He pressed it to his patented
  Reversible moustache.

He murmured, "Dearest, may I hope
  To claim you as my bride?"
The answer came, in startled tones,
  "O Johnnie, dearest—slide!"

Too late the proffered warning came;
  A shriek of wild despair,
And the scion of a noble race
  Went spinning thro' the air.

His collar, cuffs, shirt front, moustache,
  All of his grand array,
Upon the soft, green, mossy sward,
  In wild profusion lay.

While, Phœnix-like, amidst the wreck,
  With hands and lips compressed,
The maiden's angry father stood,
  And thus his child addressed:

"Come, wipe away those useless tears
  From off your nose and muzzle;
Then try your skill in fitting up
  This patent modern puzzle."

THE MINSTREL.

Beneath a blasted, hollow tree,
  One eve, at set of sun,
There sat the last of all his race,
  The hapless bard, M'Phun.

As his trembling fingers touched
  His time-worn, honoured lyre,
His face assumed an eager look,
  His eye lit up with fire.

He sang the songs of bygone years—
  The songs of long ago,
When whisky was a decent price,
  And rent of lodgings low.

He sang of battles fierce and wild,
  In alley, and on stair;
Of Amazons, who fought and fell,
  And tore each other's hair.

He sang the songs of love, and how
  No family should be
Without at least a specimen
  Of femininity.

When lo! his landlady appeared
  With cudgel stout and long:
She hit him on the head—and then
  He sang another song.

THE TOOTHACHE.

Of a' the diseases that ever I've hae'n,
There's no ane amang them that equals in pain
The toothache—the toothache's the warst o' them a';
Some geyan droll faces it aye gars me thraw.

CHORUS—
O this murdering toothache,
This jaw-racking toothache;
A' ither diseases it dings to the wa'.

Rheumatics, nae doot, is a nestie disease;
But when I've the toothache I'm never at ease;
Like a great muckle bear I gae raging aboot,
Crying, "Murder! I wish I'd this rotten ane oot."

CHORUS—
O this murdering toothache,
This jaw-racking toothache;
A' ither diseases it dings to the wa'.

If I had an enemy oot o' my range,
I'd wish him the toothache, by way o' revenge;
And some satisfaction I'm shuir I wad gain,
To hear he was dancing and roaring wi' pain.

CHORUS—
O murder! this toothache,
This jaw-racking toothache;
A' ither diseases it dings to the wa'.

My mither cries: "Geordie, you're jist a real pest;
You disturb the haill hoose, and we canna get rest.
Gae wa' to the doctor, gae wa', man, wi' speed,
And gar him draw't oot, tho' he draw aff your heid."

CHORUS—
O this murdering toothache,
This jaw-racking toothache;
A' ither diseases it dings to the wa'.

I ance took advice hoo to deaden the pain,
But certain I'm noo, I'll ne'er act on't again.
For the wee drap o' vitriol I put in my tith
Made me jump like a madman, and roar a' my pith.

CHORUS—

O this murdering toothache,
This jaw-racking toothache;
A' ither diseases it dings to the wa'.

Was ever puir mortal tormented like me;
Nae ease, day or nicht, does the yawkin' thing gi'e;
Aye, weel may ye lauch, wi' your teeth hale and soun'.
O there it's again—what a thunnerin' stoun'!

CHORUS—

O this murdering toothache,
This jaw-racking toothache;
A' ither diseases it dings to the wa'.

I ance dreamed a dream, an' it gied me a fricht:
I thocht that the toothache had killed me ootricht;
That stravaigin' the kirkyaird my ghost really was,
Wi' a piece o' white flannel rou'd up roun' its jaws,

Cryin': "Murder! this toothache,
This jaw-racking toothache;
A' ither diseases it dings to the wa'."

BORDER BALLAD.

May Morton sat the dyke upon,
  And luk'd to see what she could see;
At length she spied her true love John
  Come riding owre yon lily lea.

His steed was o' the polished steel,
  Weel shod wi' rubber frae the tree;
For metal and for speed as weel,
  A better steed ye wadna see.

His hat was o' the pletted straw,
  His knickers o' the tweed sae fine;
Whyle frae a waistcoat white as snaw
  Hung monie a gowd and siller coin.

She's ta'en him by the milk-white haun',
  And helped him down sae frank and free,
Quo' she," Come kiss me whaur I staun',
  Or underneath yon spreading tree?"

He hadna kissed her hinny mou'
  Ae single kiss, but barely twae,
When swith! her brithers, full in view,
  Cam' scorchin', madly, doon the brae.

"O haste ye, haste ye, Johnnie dear,
  To wheel and pedal, turn and flee;
For should my brithers meet ye here
  Your bluid will pay the penalty."

He's luppen on his roadster guid,
  The leddy May's lup on behin';
And owre the hill, and thro' the wud,
  They flee like stour before the win'.

O they rade on, and on they rade
  By clachan, cottage, dub, and mire;
But O, alack, for man and maid,
  His trusty steed it burst a tyre.

True Johnnie he has lichted doon,
  Alack, and that richt speedily;
But whether on his heels or croon,
  I couldna sweir—nae mair could he.

His mou' was fu' o' stour and dirt,
  His nose was like the wine sae red,
His waistcoat and his braw white shirt
  Were a' befyled, and wat wi' bluid.

The leddy, licht as onie bird,
  She landed, free o' broken banes,
Upon the saft green mossy sward,
  Behint a muckle bing o' stanes.

It's up she sprachled to her knees,
  And crawled to whaur her lover lay
In yon dyke sheugh, beneath the trees,
  A' bruised and bluidy, black and blae.

She held him in her airms and cried,
  "My ain true love, O speak tae me,"
But ne'er a word her love replied,
  A bruised and bluidy corse luk'd he.

She sabbed and grat, she tore her hair,
  She raved and waunert in her talk;
And cried alood in wud despair,
  "My bonie lad's as deid's a mauk."

It's up and cam' her brither Wull,
  And lichted doon sae cannily;
Quo' he, "There's been an unco spill,
  A fell and fearsome tragedy."

It's up and cam' her brither Hugh,
  And, lootin' doon upon his knee,
His flask he held to Johnnie's mou',
  But ne'er a sign of life made he.

They've streekit oot his limbs sae fair,
  And washed awa' the bluid and dirt
Frae every cut and every sair;
  Frae every bruise and every hurt.

And they hae twined the willow waun',
  Wi' brainches frae the birken tree,
Wi' mickle craft and skill o' haun',
  And laid him on't sae tenderly.

They hadna carried him a mile,
  A mile, or twae, or maybe mair,
Oot thro' yon moss, and owre the stile,
  Until their airms gat stiff and sair.

They laid him doon among the gorse
  To ease their shanks and draw their breath,
When up and spak' the bluidy corse,
  "O whaur's my gloves? I've lost them baith;

"And O, I fear, my hat o' straw,
  The hat, my true love gied to me,
Wi' silken ban' sae bien and braw,
  Is ruined—dune for dacency.

"It's wha will wash my waistcoat white,
  It's wha will scour my knickers fine,
And lay them oot upon the dyke,
  Or hing them up upon the line."

It's up and spak' the leddy May.
  "It's I will wash your waistcoat fine,
And scour your breeks on washing day,
  Gin ye'll be loving man o' mine.

"And never, never be unkind,
  But lo'e me till the day I dee."
"Na, na," quo' he, "I'm no inclined
  For mairried life's felicity."

"It's willy-nilly, ye maun gang
  Wi' me before a priest," quo' she,
"Or, by the heavens, ye'll rue the wrang—
  The wrang that ye hae dune to me."

Puir Johnnie, tremblin' took her haun',
  And stammered oot, "My dearest May,
I'm yours for ever to comman',
  To honour, love ye, and obey.

"Gae bring to me my tyreless steed,
  Gae saddle me my bonnie bike,
We'll tae the toun, wi' utmost speed,
  And mairried get as sune's ye like."

They've ta'en him to the nearest town,
  And mairried him withoot delay;
The bells rang oot a merry tune,
  And wow but there was great adae.

And noo sin' they are man and wife,
  And riding tandem thro' the mire,
We hope the cruel thorns o' life
  Will never pierce the marriage tyre.

THE TWA CATS.

Twa cats sat up on the gairden dyke,
  Sing hey, sing ho, my bonnie wee dearie,
As canty, as couthie, and sib as ye like;
  And wow but the worl' was bricht and cheery.

Quo' Tam, "You're the jewel, the licht o' my life,
  Sing hey, sing ho, my bonnie wee poosie,
I'm lanely at nichts, and I'm wanting a wife,
  It's O for a mate and a denty wee hoosie.

"Oh come to my bosie, and gie me a kiss,
  Sing hey, sing ho, my bonnie wee dawtie."
"Uncuddle," quo' she, "and gae hame oot o' this,
  Sing hum, sing ha, noo dinna be naughty.

"Your big muckle whiskers, they tickle my mou',
  Sing hum, sing ha, wi' a luk melancholy.
I'm naypher your dawtie nor croodlin doo,
  It's O for the shame o't, the sin, and the folly."

He sidled awa', and he clum up a tree,
  With a fig for the sex, and especially Katey.
"She may gang to the dogs or the tanner for me;
  I'll sune get anither, a kindlier matey."

Puir Katey grew eerie wi' sittin' her lane;
  "Sing hey, sing ho, O come to your dawtie,
And tickle her mou' wi' your whiskers again,
  For she likes ye the best when you're wicked and
    naughty."

He jumped on the dyke, and he fell on his feet;
  Sing hey, sing ho, for the purrin' and wooin'.
The noise o' their coortin' was heard on the street;
  It's O and alack to their utter undoin'.

They met in a lang, and a luvin' embrace,
  Sing hey, sing ho, my bonnie wee dearie,
When a brick, frae a window, cam' fleein' thro' space;
  And wow but the worl' was dark and dreary.

The coort made inquiry, and witnesses swore ;
  Alack for the verdict on whilk they decided.
Like neebors and freens, wha are leevin' next door,
  By a single brick only the twa were divided.

THE REVENGE.

Tam Todd, the farmer o' Breckanbrae,
  Bred muckle care and strife;
When he clawed the croon o' Betsy Broon,
  His faithfu', lovin' wife.

For far and near, her neebors dear,
  Frae cleugh and clachan cam',
To air their lungs, and len' their tongues
  To flyte for Mistress Tam.

There was lang-tongued Meg, frae Ailsa Craig—
  A douchty dame was she,
Wha had flytt her lord oot hoose and ha;
  And vanquished lawyers three;

And flytin' Jean, frae 'yont Culzean,
  Wha's tongue, and gruesome luks,
Wad fricht the Frainch, or put to flicht
  A canvasser o' beuks.

There was big-mou'd Bet, frae Windy-yett—
  She o' the waukit tongue,
Wha's scaulin' deeds, in guid lang screeds,
  The auncient poets sung;

And bletherin' Bab, wi' the clatterin' gab,
  Wha hailed frae Sliddery-slap;
And Kirsty Maclung, wi' the leather lungs,
  And a mou' like a ratton trap.

There was Grizzie M'Caw, wi' the sweevel jaw,
  Of wham tradition said,
"She could skirl and squeal like the very deil,
  And spit fire like a taed";

And haverin' Bell, and claverin' Nell;
  Black Bess, and monie mae.
Some five-and-twenty tongues, a' told,
  Were pantin' for the fray.

They ta'en to horse, and thro' the gorse,
  And ower yon grassy lea,
They merrily rade—their trusty guide,
  The dauntless Meg M'Phee.

Until, at noon, they sat them doon,
  By Tammie's front door mat;
Whar, owre a claut o' hame-brewed maut,
  Their rusty tongues they whatt.

Bauld Tammie, frae his garret hie,
  Luk'd doon upon the thrang;
He winked his e'e, and then he gied
  His muckle nose a spang.

And speir'd them gin their mammys kenn'd
  That they were rinnin' loose:
Wha cut their hair sae short, and bare;
  Or had they seen a moose.

It's up and spak' bauld Meg M'Phee—
  And an angry dame was she,
"It's O that I had ten thoosan' tongues,
  And ilk ane waggin' free,

"That I micht scaul wi' them a', at ance,
  And oot my venom spue,
On that muckle drucken, saul-provokin',
  Menseless, senseless soo;

"That muckle brock, o' a worthless stock;
  That Judas o' the breed,
That daurs to lift, 'mang dacent folk,
  His empty timmer heid.

"Gae oot my sicht, ye human fricht,"
  She skirled in looder key;
Then, wi' an aith, she sunk her teeth,
  Twa inches in a tree.

Then flytin' Jean, wi' wulcat een,
  And lood hysteric lauch,
Flew to the chairge, like onie tairge,
  And rak'd him fore and aft.

"Come doon," quo' she, "come doon to me,
  And show that creeshie face,
Ye reekin', red-het sinner o'
  A Guid-forgotten race.

"Come doon the stair, and no staun' there,
  And gloom, and glunch, and glumph;
Ye silly, wabbit, shauchle gabbit,
  Saulless muckle sumph.

"Come doon, or, feth, I'll be your death;
  I'll cleave ye to the teeth.
Ye toozie, loozie, snuffie, boozie,
  Hang-dug lukin' thief."

Her voice grew hearse, her tongue could scarce
  Play wallop in her mooth.
Then big-mou'd Bet, cried "Oot the gate,
  Staun' back and gie me skooth,

"That I may curse, before I burst,
  And ease my heevin' breist,
On this muckle fozzie, easie-ozzie,
  Graceless human beast.

"That ocht to swing, in hempen string,
  For deeds we daurna name;
Or hide, in dirty, aidle hole,
  His muckle heid for shame.

"It gars me grue to luk upon
  That muckle, ugly face;
That cuddy-luggit, monkey-muggit
  Libel on the race.

"O jist gi'e me my wull o' him,
  And, if I dinna kaim
That heid o' his, and claw his phizz,
  Bet Tamson's no my name."

Then haverin' Bell, and claverin' Nell;
  Black Bess, and a' the lave,
Wi' skreigh and skirl, join in the quarrel,
  And like wud deils behave.

They flytt fu' lang, they flytt fu' lood;
  And O, but they flytt sair;
They scaur'd him oot o' the wuts he had,
  And he fled like a frichtit hare.

Owre hill and dale they followed his trail,
  Ne'er laggin' far behin';
Till, brocht to bay, on the Drawkill-brae,
  He lap oot owre a linn.

And noo, when years hae come and gane,
  Their yaummerin', chaummerin' din,
May still be heard by travellers lane,
  In the eerie sugh o' the win'.

A LEAP YEAR INCIDENT.

'Twas leap year, in the balmy spring,
  When birds begin to sing;
And hope springs forth in every breast,
  Exultant on the wing.

Beneath a spreading hawthorn tree
  Two gushing children sat,
Their faces radiant with health,
  Engaged in loving chat.

Confidingly she laid her head
  Against his beating breast;
His brawny arm encircled her;
  She close and closer pressed.

She murmured, "Darling, tell me if
  Your heart is fancy free,
And are those wild, tumultuous throbs,
  I hear, alone for me?"

"You've made a slight mistake, my dear,"
He answered, with despatch,
"You're listening to the throbbings of
My big Geneva watch."

THE STREET WAIF.

He never knew the joys of home;
A mother's tender care;
At night he wandered thro' the street,
Or slept upon a stair.

No kind or loving words were his,
To cheer him thro' the strife;
But kicks and cuffs, an every-day
Occurrence of his life.

Up and down, the whole day long,
He dragged his weary feet,
A-searching for a crust among
The ashes on the street.

The busy, heartless passers-by
Would on and onwards press;
They seemed to close their ears against
His wild wail of distress.

Till one, more kindly than the rest,
Compassion on him took,
And bore him to her cottage home
Beside a babbling brook.

With loving care she tended him
  Beside her humble hearth;
But, O, alas! her cares were vain;
  His time was short on earth.

His eyes grew dim, his matted head
  Fell heavy on his breast;
His labouring breath gave token that
  He soon would be at rest.

Reader, withhold your briny tears,
  He is not suffering now;
His eyes are fixed, his form is still,
  And hushed his bow-wow-wow.

THE LAD I LO'E.

He's swank and strappin', gash and gaucy,
  Nayther young nor auld;
He's big and sonsie, never donsie,
  Buirdly, steive, and bauld.

He's wicht and winsome, leal and lo'esome;
  Weel I ken him true;
Nae guile nor ill's within the bosom
  O' this bit lad I lo'e.

He's blythe and merry, braw and bonnie,
  Couthie, kind, and free;
He's sweeter far than drappin' honey,
  And a' the worl' to me.

He dresses dacent, no auld-fashion't,
  Modest and genteel;
He dances finely, maist divinely,
  Jig or Hielan' reel.

His hair is swirly, black and curly,
  Glossy as the slae;
His beard is bushy, thick and grushie,
  Showin' signs o' grey.

Nae lordly dwallin'-hoose nor hallan
  Can he ca' his ain;
Nae biel' nor biggin', ruif nor riggin'
  To fen him frae the rain.

Altho' he hinna walth, nor binna
  Octhlins kin o' bien,
To me he's dearer, sib, and nearer
  Than my nearest freen'.

And gin his name ye wad be speirin',
  Laith am I to tell;
To blab or mention in your hearin'—
  This bit lad's mysel'.

SONG.

(AIR: Villikins and his Dinah.)

Of a charming young damsel I'll sing you a song.
Her name it was Tibbie, but maybe I'm wrong.
Her dad was a farmer: from Dublin he came,
And his name it was—ach! I've forgotten his name.

CHORUS—
Li tooral li looral, &c.

This charming young damsel had cheeks like the rose,
A pock-pitted face, and a tip-tilted nose:
Her skin was the lily, so pure and so white;
And her eyes, they were black—every Saturday night.

CHORUS—
Li tooral li looral, &c.

This beautiful damsel, she stumbled and fell,
Just a little, in love with a broken-down swell,
Who lived down a close, up a ricketty stair,
Thro' a passage that led to—the devil knows where.

CHORUS—
Li tooral li looral, &c.

This young man, so bold; and this maiden so bright,
They went out a-walking one fine summer night;
With his arm round her waist, he said, "O dearest Tib,
I love you devoutly." Says she, "It's a fib."

CHORUS—
Li tooral li looral, &c.

"O no, it is true, dear; and, listen to this:
If you should refuse me just one little kiss,
By my beard and moustachios, it's then I'll take two."
"O will you," says she, "I'll be kissed if you do."

CHORUS—
Li tooral li looral, &c.

In the struggle that followed, her dander arose;
So she hit him a terrible thump on the nose.
Then the blood from his nostrils like fountains did squirt,
And bedabbled with gore all his beautiful shirt.

CHORUS—
Li tooral li looral, &c.

When she saw he was done for, she turned and she fled,
And hid herself quietly anunder the bed;
Where, early next morning, her body was found,
With her garters tied tightly her gizzard around.

CHORUS—
Li tooral li looral, &c.

Now, all you young ladies intending to mate,
Beware of this young girl's terrible fate.
Ne'er go out a-walking with lovers unkissed;
When they ask for your hand, never give them your fist.

CHORUS—
Li tooral li looral, &c.

CONVALESCING.

I am here in the flesh, at "The Loans;"
Or rather, I'm here in the bones;
Thro' the flesh I have shed,
I am partially dead,
To th' extent of some three or four stones,
At "The Loans,"
I've departed some three or four stones.

My landlady makes it her boast
She will yet resurrect what is lost;
Will raise what is shrunk
Of my being, defunct,
With chicken and fish, tea and toast,
At my cost,
She will yet resurrect what is lost.

I'm so meagre, so spare, and so thin,
Just a structure of bones, with a skin,
As tough as old leather,
To hold me together,
Till the widening process begins
In my skin;
Till th' upholstery work shall begin.

When old Mother Hubbard, in glee,
Went forth with her skeleton key,
To open the door,
And her cupboard explore,
Why! she may have been looking for me,
D'ye see?
She must have been looking for me.

For a month at a time I was fed
On visions of butter and bread,
    On promises fair,
    On sterilised air,
And fricaseed fog, I was fed,
        In my bed;
'Twas a great and a glorious spread.

No matter how often I'd try,
On my stomach there's nothing would lie,
    Save a warm water bag,
    Or an old linen rag,
With a poultice of mustard, or rye;
        By the by,
I thought I was going to die.

But, slowly, I rose in my might,
Put Death and the doctors to flight;
    Then recovered at length
    That part of my strength
They had wrested from me in the fight;
        In my might
I certainly put them to flight.

They tackled my numerous ills
With morphine and opium pills;
    They hungered and starved me,
    They cut and they carved me
With lances as long as their bills;
        I'd the chills
When I looked at the length of their bills.

They physicked me till I grew worse;
They bled me in body and purse,
    Till both got so thin
    I was forced to bring in
My banker, as well as a nurse,
        To disburse,
And replenish my body and purse.

I often awoke in distress
With a head not a brilliant success;
    With a thirst of the stamp
    That a loafer or tramp
Would barter his soul to possess—
        Nothing less:
Would give up his soul to possess.

Now, to live and let live is my creed;
I'm averse to a dastardly deed,
    Yet I mean to prescribe,
    For the medical tribe,
Some powders and pills made of lead;
        In their need,
I'll prescribe for them powder and lead.

EPITAPHS.

ON A POSTMAN.

Here, in the deid letter office he lies,
  Wi' Death's leaden stamp on his broo,
Till his Owner, in glory, sen's doon frae the skies,
  His couriers, trusted and true,

To gather his missing despatches to earth;
  To sort them, and bring them away.
Then, fear it not, stranger, the post-mark o' worth
  Will be writ on his wrapper o' clay.

ON AN INVETERATE SMOKER.

Puir Willie Watson's pipe's gane oot;
  He never mair will fash us.
The spark is fled; this narrow bed
  Contains nocht but the ashes.

But dinna grieve, for what is wrang
  May in the end be richted;
As likely's no, the buddy's gane
  To whar he'll get it lichted.

ON A DRUNKEN EXCISEMAN.

  Deep in this grave
  Lie the rotten staves
Of a famous whisky cask.
  The spirit's gone
  From under Bond—
To where we need not ask.
  That gruesome trader's
  Warrant came
To Death, with this injunction:
  "Send on"—here quoted,
  "The undernoted
Spirit for consumption."

ON A BLACKSMITH.

Puir Robin's smiddy fire's gane oot;
  The spark o' life has fled;
His bellows noo are still and mute.
  In this lone, narrow bed,
The ashes lie secure at last,
  Frae warl'y care and strife,
Waiting the last trump's dinsome blast
  To blaw them into life.

ON A GLUTTON.

Beneath this sod, a feast for worms,
  Purveyed in Death's best style,
The body of a glutton lies
  At rest from roast and boil.

Ye worms, that lo'e a sweet bite, fix
  Your fangs upon his throttle;
For few sic feasts ye get. But O,
  Avoid him if teetotal.

ON AN AUCTIONEER.

Here lies the body of Jonas Grier,
Valuator and auctioneer,
Who, living, valued life no more
Than angels care for Mammon's store;
But his precious soul he did consider,
And knocked it down to the highest bidder.

ON DAVIE BELL.

Here lies the shell
  O' Davie Bell;
Auld Nick the kernel's gotten.
  We wish him luck
  O' sic like muck,
'Twas, ilka bit o't, rotten.

ON A SUPERVISOR.

Here he lies,
A Supervis—
Or of Excise,
In cask of clay,
Waiting the day
Almighty God's
Divining rod
Shall gauge and find
His depth of mind:
Note his spirit's
Strength and merit.
If his spirit's proof
Against untruth,
(As worth is given
A place in Heaven),
He, duty free,
Shall rise in glee,
At once ascend
To join that blend
Of happy spirits
Which inherit
Eternal life,
Aloof from strife.

ON A TAILOR.

A tailor rests in this abode,
  The home of lord and peasant.
Stranger, withhold your tears until
  The other eight are present.

ON A SLUGGARD.

Earth'd up, at last, and happit roun',
  Lies ane we little miss.
He *may* rise in the ither worl',
  He ne'er wad do't in this.

ON PATE M'PHUN.

  Here lies the late
  Diverting Pate
M'Phun: as stiff's a poker.
  Some witty dart
  Hath pierced his heart,
From Death, that famous joker.

  "Ha, ha!" Pate laughed,
  And hugged the shaft,
As if in love with Death's display,
  "This joker, he,
  So tickles me,
He fairly takes my breath away."

PART II.

VERSE.

SPRING.

Mither Nature's
Every feature
Is beamin' wi' delicht;
Birdies chantin'
In the plantin',
Bonnie, blythe, and bricht.

Buds are burstin',
Floo'rs are thirstin',
Drinkin' in the dew;
Grass is growin',
Cattle lowin',
Corbies hunt the ploo.

Shine and shadow
Owre the meadow,
Blinkin' bonnilee;
Lichtsome lammies,
Roun' their mammies,
Loupin' fu' o' glee.

Burnies giggle,
Dance and treble
Owre the rocky linns,
Keekin', cookin',
Jinkin', joukin'
'Neath the gowden whins.

Aipple blossoms
Bare their bosoms
To the lordly Sun;
Owre the hedges
Cluds o' midges
Dancin' in their fun.

Craiks are yirmin',
Loodly chirmin',
'Mang the fields o' rye;
Laverocks wingin',
Upwards singin',
Music floods the sky.

Heaven rejoices,
Mystic voices
Speak to me and sing
Of bliss supernal
And eternal
In another Spring.

IN A GARRET.

I leeve in a garret my lane,
Tho' it's no very big it's my ain;
And it's halesome and sweet,
Is the breid that I eat,
For, ye see, I'm behauden to nane
O' my ain;
Thank guid, I'm behauden to nane.

I've a table, a stule, and a chair,
A spune, and some crockery ware;
    I've a kettle, a can,
    And a clever wee pan,
Wi' a bed, and a blanket to spare,
        I declare;
I hae bedding eneuch and to spare.

What tho' my bit income be sma',
Jist little or naething ava;
    It's a comfort to think,
    When on poverty's brink,
That ye haena much farer to fa',
        When it's sma';
Dod, ye haena much farer to fa'.

Awa' wi' the bother and fash
Connec'et wi' siller and cash,
    Jist a shullin' to spen',
    And anither to len';
A' the lave is but lumber and trash,
        Bringing fash
To the mortal that's burdened wi' cash.

A neebor wha leeves but and ben
Luks in for a wee, noo and then,
    When I'm no very weel,
    Jist to speir hoo I feel,
And she'll maybe redd up the fire-en'
        When she's ben;
Dod, she'll maybe tosh up the fire-en'.

For my faimly, they never luk near,
Nae mair than I'd never been here;
No ane o' the core
Ever darkens my door
Sin' I flitted my gudes and my gear,
And cam' here;
No ane o' them ever luks near.

Aff and on, for a twalmonth thegither,
I stey'd wi' the tane or the tither;
But I ne'er had a hame,
That was worthy the name,
Sin' I lost my auld leddy, their mither,
Gane thither;
Sin' I lost my auld helpmate, their mither.

Wi' Anra, his wife, and his weans,
I stey'd for a whyle at the Mains;
But she yammer't and flayt
On me early and late,
And I couldna put up wi' the weans
At the Mains;
Dod, I mortally fashed at the weans.

Jist to ken you're the cause o' the strife
Atween your ain son and his wife;
Or to feel, when you eat,
That she grudges your meat,
Man, it gangs to the heart like a knife,
By my life;
Aye, it cuts to the heart like a knife.

But nae mair will I niffer and troke
For a leevin' wi' Anra or Jock;
I can work to the last,
An' it come to the warst
I wull tak' the staff and the pock.
And I'll yoke
To the beggin' like ither puir folk.

Dod, it's while I've a moothfu' o' win'
I'll never say dee nor gie in,
Till Death mak's his ca'
To tak' me awa'
To yon bonnie bricht garret abune,
Owre the mune;
To dwall in yon garret abune.

KEEKIE BOO.

Oor bairnies roun' the ingle cheek—
The noisy crew,
Are busy playing at hide and seek,
At keekie boo.
There's Leezie, Jock, and Maggie Jane,
Wee Tam, wha scarce can rin his lane.
Oor Jimmock, and a neebor wean,
Wee Gibbie Frew.

A' fu' o' daffin', fun, and glee—
Noo I'll be boun',
The like o' them ye winna see
In a' the toon.
They're rinnin' here, and hiding there,
In press, and closet, everywhere;
"Gude gracious, Tam's fa'n doon the stair,
And crack'd his croon.

"An' did it crunt its croon, my lam',
My sugar doo?
The stair, it did it to ma wee Tam,
Did it to you?
Wheesht, noo, wheesht, the poosie cat
Is lauchin' at ye—luk at that.
Gae wa' ye clatty, nasty brat,
Jist quat it noo.

"Will mammy pey the muckle stair
For meddlin' you?
Wheesht, wheesht, and tell me whar it's sair;
Noo, noo; noo, noo.
Whar's his rattle? Bring him't, Liz,
Ye'll no get it, no, it's his.
Bring his rattle; there it is;
Hurroo, hurroo.

"Noo, Tam, gae ower, I winna staun
This how d'y' do.
Wha'd put up wi' you, ye thrawn
Ill natur't screw?

Roaring there, ye muckle cuif,
As if ye wad bring doon the ruif;
Jist quat it, or I'll draw my luif
Across your mou'.

"I won'er that ye don't think shame,
Ye girnin' fricht.
I'll tell your da when he comes hame,
This very nicht.
I'll let him ken the toil and faucht
I hae wi' you, frae nine to aucht;
That face has never yet been straucht
Sin' mornin' licht."

Jist listen to their noise and din,
Their wild halloo;
Ye'd think 'twas Bedlam ye were in,
Or London Zoo.
Wee Meg cries oot, "Noo, Johnnie Law,
Jist hide your face against the wa',
And dinna luk until we a'
Cry keekie boo."

"Come oot," cries Jock, "whar'er you be
In hiding noo;
A better chance ye'll never see—
I spy ye, Frew."
There oot jumps Frew like wan o'clock,
"Rin, ye stuiffie, rin man, Jock;
Gude gracious, they'll hae doon the nock—
The rowdy crew.

"Ye muckle steerin' deevil, Jock,
When ye begin
Ye'd keep a big hoose, fu' o' folk,
In noise and din.
Here, haun me owre that leather strap;
Noo, jist come near me, ma wee chap,
I'll gi'e ye something ower ma lap,
You'll maybe fin.

"Ma sang! o' you the hoose I'll redd,
I'll wad a croon,
Gin ye're no' a' intae your bed
And sleepin' soun'
Before I rise." There, see them cast
Their duds like leaves afore the blast;
They're in their beds, thank guid, at last,
And cuddled doon.

Puir, guileless lam's, they little ken,
Or dream th' noo,
That life at best is but a gemm
At keekie boo.
There's aulder, bigger bairns wha rin
In search o' Him, the hidden Ane,
Wha's hiding place is far abune
The bonnie blue.

Wi' wary e'e, aye dreidin' skaith,
We cook and keek,
Thro' gloomy cluds and mists o' death,
For Him we seek.

And aften dae we come to grief
Doon stairs o' doubt and unbelief;
We're bairnlike, never oot mischief,
Plain truth to speak.

SCOTCH BALLAD.

The bluid red sun was glow'rin' ower
Dundonald's wuds at e'en,
Wi' wistfu' e'e, as laith to le'e,
The glories o' the scene.

The gloamin' fast was gatherin' roun'
Dundonald's stately ha',
As leddy Marion sat in grief
Ayont the castle wa'.

Aroun' her knee her bairnies three,
As puir wee lammies bleat,
Aye lukin' in her face and cryin',
"Mither, dinna greet."

But aye she sabbed, and aye she grat,
And tore her yellow hair,
And sech'd "Ah, me! I'll never see
My winsome marrow mair.

"The gowden whins will bloom again,
The snawdraps sweetly blaw;
And birdies sing the wauk'nin' Spring,
In yonder birken shaw.

"The Simmer shoo'rs will bathe the floo'rs
  Wi' fragrant dewy weet,
And the bee and the milk-white butterflee
  Will dance in the noonday heat.

"The yellow sun will smile again
  On Autumn sere and broon;
But, ah! nae mair he'll smile on me—
  My sun o' life's gane doon.

"For he, my lord and maister dear,
  Wi' five-and-forty men,
On yonder plain, lies foully slain,
  By Roderick o' the Glen.

"'Twas but yestreen, nae far'er gane,
  His ghaist appeared to me;
And O sae wan his snaw-white broo,
  And dull and glaiz't his e'e.

"His manly breist was sairly gashed
  Wi' ae big gapin' woun';
And aye as I luk'd on its bluidy mou',
  My heart gied the tither stoun.

"He held me in his clay cauld airms,
  He pressed me to his heart;
And kissed awa', wi' clammy lips,
  The tears that aye wad start.

"'O dry the tear, the saut, saut tear,
  And dinna greet, guidwife,
For O I am weary and fain wad sleep
  Awa' frae the sturt and strife.

"'O swathe me roun' in my windin' sheet,
  And lay me aneath the swaird,
In the howm owre by, whar my faithers lie
  At rest in the auld kirkyaird.

"'And ye maun gie me your promise true,
  Ye maun sweer a holy aith,
By yon siller mune, and the God abune,
  That ye will avenge my death.'

"I swore by Him wha rules abune,
  And a' that I held guid,
That I ne'er wad rest, in my herried nest,
  Till I pey'd the debt o' bluid.

"As he pressed me to his breist ance mair,
  By some wanchancie hap,
He melted awa' in my airms like the mist
  Frae aff Ben Lomond tap."

And the nicht closed in, the wild fox barked,
  The dews aroun' did fa',
And the hoolet maned his eerie plaint
  Aroun' the castle wa'.

And still she sat, and sabbed, and grat,
  And tore her yellow hair;
And sech'd, "Ah, me! I'll never see
  My winsome marrow mair."

LANGSYNE.

It's O for the days o' oor daffin' and glee,
When barefitted callans, licht-hearted and free,
We ran on the braes, owre the auld quarry knowes,
Whaur the brume, and the breckan, and the butter-
  cup growes;
Whaur we played at coach horses, the bonnets, and
  tig,
And waded the water below the wee brig,
Wi' oor jaickets and grauvats hung up on the trees,
And our corduroy breeks buttle't up to oor knees;
Or rakit the plantin's till weary and lame,
Then hungry as hawks, we gaed hirplin hame,
To be met at the door wi' "Lo'd whaur ha'e ye been
To this time o' nicht? Callan, whit d'ye mean?
Jist luk at your claes, a' as wat as a clash:
O, it's little ye think o' the bother and fash
That ye gi'e to your mither, aye nicht after nicht.
Ye raggit-like scaur-craw, get oot o' my sicht."

Nae won'er at times that we sit doon and greet,
When we think on the freens we will never mair
  meet—
The freens o' oor youth that are scattered and gane,

That are deid and awa'. 'Mang them a' there is nane,
O' the freens we ha'e noo, half sae couthie and kin'
As the leal-hearted callans, the freens o' langsyne.
There was wee Geordie Kinney, a steerin' wee deil,
As hardy as nails and as soople's an eel,
Wha wad clim' up a tree, in his daffin' and fun,
And swing himsel' doon by a brainch to the grun'.
But it happened ae day that this cocky wee chap,
At this monkey-like trick, had an unco mishap;
The brainch gie'in wey he cam' doon wi' a thump.
Jist richt on his bum, on a muckle tree stump.
His face grew sae white, maist the colour o' death;
Losh, the callan was heartet and couldna get breath;
He ettled to speak; but no! never a soun',
Till we Davie Ross, to the burn rinnin' doon,
Filled up his bonnet, as quick as ye'd wink,
Wi' the clear caller water and gied him a drink.
Only then he gat up a bit burst o' a greet,
And was able at last to gae hame on his feet.

Noo of a' the exploits, and they werena a few,
That wee Sannock Kinnicum ever cam' thro',
The ane at the Mains was the warst o' them a',
And micht weel ha'e gat him the lash o' the law.
He had clum up a tree, jist ahint the big hoose;
And there he was sitting quite cocky and crouse,
When wha should come lampin' oot owre the green swaird,
Wi' his great muckle dug, but Sir Tummas the laird.
"Come down, you young rascal, come down off that tree;
Come down in a moment; come down, sir," quo' he.

Quo' Sannock, half greetin', "It's no' me to blame;
Hughock Samson, he tell't me ye werena at hame;
That ye wadna be back for a geyan lang while;
And it's if I come doon ye will gi'e me the jile."
"Come down; I'll not touch you," Sir Tummas then said,
"On my honour I'll harm not a hair of your head."
Quo' Sannock, still dootfu', and lukin' a' roun',
"Say 'As suir as death,' Tam, and it's then I'll come doon."

There was wee Robin Wilson (he's aye leevin' yet),
Wha scarce ever wanted a thorn in his fit;
Sae ran on his taes maist the haill simmer thro';
For Robin was speedy: could rin like a groo.
He believed in the saying that "Sookin' raw eggs
Wull mak' ye lang-winded and swift on your legs."
Tho' we didna believe that sic was the case,
Wee Robin was never behin' in a race.
In a chase frae "auld Treesie," the laird o' Treesbanks,
(Wha was aye on the watch for oor ploys and oor pranks),
Only ance was he gruppit, and maitters luk'd bad,
As a couple o' hares in his bonnet he had—
Twa bonnie wee hares in his bonnet, it's true.
(The buddy, he hasna much mair in't the noo,
As the last time we saw him, ae nicht in the toon,
He was getting quite bald-like and bare i' the croon).
We fancy we see him jist there tak' his staun,
Wi' an auld riddle rim for a girr in his haun;

Wi' his broon velvet jaicket and corduroy breeks,
And a face as it hadna seen water for weeks.
On his heid an auld bonnet, that ance had been blue,
Wi' a hole in the croon o't—his hair stickin' thro';
Jist the picture o' health, tho' a toozie wee tyke,
Sae sleekit, sae sly, and sae innocent like.
O, a tricky wee monkey, aye fond o' a wap,
Wha could never gae by ye without a bit slap,
And if ye but answered, "Noo, that is eneuch,"
He wad pick aff your bonnet and fling't in the sheuch.

O the scrapes he gat intae, the pranks that he played,
On this ane, or that ane, wharever he gaed.
But the trick that he played—'twas the warst o' them a',
On puir Jamie Lammie, that's deid and awa'.
It happened when Jamie cam' Caiperton airt,
For a cairtfu' o' coals, wi' his cuddy and cairt,
We callans and halflins aroun' him wad thrang
And fill Jamie's cairt for a story or sang.
O' this time we speak, if we be na' mista'en,
He was singin' "Sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dunblane."
Noo, something had happened to lowse Jamie's tongue,
For this was the gist o' the sang that he sung,
In a voice fu' o' feeling, sae measured and slow:
"My charming young Jessie—O, whoa, ye bruit, whoa,
Some ill-deedy rascal, some meddlesome buddy,
Has put a bit coal in the lug o' my cuddy."

He raged like a madman, he cursed and he swore;
And the cuddy let oot sic a terrible roar,
That Rab, gettin' frichtit, was aff like a hare,
And Jamie, the puir body, saw him nae mair.

When ilk farmer ca'd in at the Sheaf or the Bull,
On the Fridays gaun hame, for his hindmost bit gill,
We callans wad gather aroun' him in force,
And wrangle and fecht to get haudin' his horse.
There was ae mickle callan, a terrible splore,
What didna belang to the rest o' the core,
Wha challenged wee Francie Raeside to a fecht,
Tho' bigger by inches, maist dooble his wecht.
He coontit his buttons and spat in his face,
And then gied him foogie—an unco disgrace,
Whilk Frank couldna staun; so he at him like fung—
Got his heid in his oxter and hit him a whung
Jist richt on the nose; then he gie'd him anither;
Gart him baa like a calf, and cry "Mither, O mither."
When Frank let him go, then he up wi' a stane;
But Frank took it frae him, and hit him again
Sic a loonderin' lick on the side o' the jaw,
That it settled the bully for ance and for a'.

There was wee Davie Porter, sae eager was he
To get haudin' a horse that he didna agree
Wi' the ithers in waitin' till ance it drew up,
But wad rin till he met it. The reins he wad grup,
And lead it in triumph richt up to a door,
Whaur aiblins it never had stoppit before.
Then likely the farmer wad thank him and say,

"I'm no' gaun to stop, sir, at least no' the day;
But some ither time when I'm comin' alang
I'll be glad o' your help." Then awa' he wad gang.
Ae nicht he was haudin' a horse at the Bull
For a farmer wha cam' frae ayont Craigie Hill.
When he cam' to the door, up to Davie he gaed,
And lukit him ower, and solemnly said:
"You're jist rayther big for a penny I see;
And yet for a dram you're a kennin' ower wee.
I'd best gae ye naething—jist naething ava."
He then put his whup to the horse and awa',
And left Davie staunnin' wi' tears in his een,
As dumpit a callan as ever he'd been.

O, it's when we luk back on the days that are gane
We seem to hae leev't in a worl' o' oor ain,
Whaur the skies were a brichter and bonnier blue,
And the floo'rs had a sweeter and lovelier hue;
Whaur the birds whustled sweeter the hedges amang,
And blyther and baulder the laverock sang;
Whaur the plantin's were forests to you and to me,
And ilka bit burnie a braid, rowin' sea;
Whaur hills that were jist o' an ordinar' size
Seemed great muckle mountains that reached to the skies.
Even commonplace folks were lukit on then
No' as ordinary mortals, but men amang men.

A man we luk'd up to was auld Robin Pitt;
Straucht-forrit and honest, he'd gumption and wit;
He didna believe in the minister's plan

O' stuffin' and feedin' the spiritual man;
But held that a guid and a weel-cookit dinner
Wad mak' ye a saunt oot o' mony a sinner;
That a man can be bad when his stomach is fu',
Or guid when it's toom, he wad never alloo.
"It's a' stuff and nonsense," he'd say, "that 'The haun
That is rockin' the cradle is rulin' the lan','
It's the haun o' the wife, 'mang the meal and the flour
That, wielding the spurtle, is the dominant pooer."
Noo Robin could argue at length and debate
On maitters concerning the Kirk and the State.
He was orator, cobbler, and poet by turns;
Weel posted in Shakespeare, the Bible, and Burns;
Could doctor a wean wi' the measles or mumps;
Or tell ye your fortune by reading your bumps.
Though honest and truthfu', and ocht but a knave,
He'd his fauts and his failin's as weel as the lave;
He likit a dram, on a chance nicht at e'en,
In the "Bull" or the "Sheaf" wi' a cronie or freen.
Ae nicht he foregathered and crackit till late
Wi' the factor, or grieve, on Knockmarloch estate.
"Man, factor," quo' he, "I hae lang had a min'
To examine your bumps. Sae if you're inclined
To gang on wi' the business, we'll jist hae it dune."
Quo' the factor: "Weel, Robin, come on and begin."
He fummlet awhile 'mang his bumps and his hair,
Takin' notes o' them here, makin' measurements there;
Lukit grave for a wee, then his verdict he gied:
"Man, factor," quo' he, "you've a capital heid."
"Nae doot," quo' the factor, "but Pitt, I'll be sworn
Gin ye had it ye wadna think much o't the morn."

But noo a' the glamour and glory is gane
Frae oot o' our lives. We wander alane
'Mang the scenes o' oor youth, wi' the tear in oor e'e,
Whaur every buss, and every tree
Has a story to tell that brings back to oor min'
The couthie wee callans and freens o' langsyne.
Then it's O to be back in the sunshine and heat,
Wi' the win' in oor hair and the grass at oor feet;
To feel as we felt ere the warl' and it's care
Had furrowed oor foreheids, and whitened oor hair;
But never again 'neath the licht o' the sun
Will we taste o' sic pleasures, sic innocent fun;
But we firmly believe, ower the borders o' Time,
We will meet in a brichter and happier clime,
Whaur never again we'll be fated to tyne
The pleasures o' youth and the freens o' langsyne.

BLYTHESOME BAIRNIES.

Blythesome bairnies, fu' o' fun,
Tanned and freckled wi' the sun,
'Mang the gowans rant and play
At rumple tumple doon the brae.
Heedless they o' hurt or skaith,
Pechan sair an' oot o' breath,
Mony's the ups and doons they hae
At rumple tumple doon the brae.

CHORUS.

Speilin' up and rowan doon,
Tirlie whirlie roun' and roun',
Time's aboot's the fairest play
At rumple tumple doon the brae.

Rosy cheeks and toozie hair,
Legs and ankles broon and bare,
Duddies a' in disarray
At rumple tumple doon the brae.
Doon they go and up they get,
Noo they keep the puddin' het,
Clap their hauns and cry "Hooray!"
Then rumple tumple doon the brae.

CHORUS.

Speilin' up and rowan doon,
Tirlie whirlie roun' and roun',
Time's aboot's the fairest play
At rumple tumple doon the brae.

Bigger bairnies ape the strife,
Speilin' up the brae o' life,
Shout and mak' a great adae,
Then rumple tumple doon the brae;
Ithers, haply gainin' grun,
Lauch like wud to see the fun,
Miss their fit, like mony mae,
And rumple tumple doon the brae.

CHORUS.

Speilin' up and rowan doon,
Tirlie whirlie roun' and roun',
Time's aboot's the fairest play
At rumple tumple doon the brae.

UNSUNG HEROES.

I sing of deeds unknown to fame,
By heroes worthy of the name—
The hardy miners, doomed to toil
Long fathoms deep beneath the soil,
Where deadly air and poison damp
But scarce sustain the flickering lamp.

No cheering rays of heaven illume
The darkness of their living tomb,
Where, buried from the light of day,
With brawny arms they cleave their way
Thro' stubborn walls of coal and rock,
'Midst blinding dust and stifling smoke,
That sap the life and clog the breath,
And doom them to an early death.

Yet, all undaunted in the strife,
While brightly burns the lamp of life,
From day to day, with ready click,
They ply the hammer and the pick,
Or wield the ponderous sledge of steel,
Till nerves and sinews tingling reel,

Till arms grow numb, and down their cheeks
The grimy sweat, in channeled streaks,
Proclaim the glowing open pores,
And smartly nip their bleeding sores.

Mark yonder toiler, sore beset,
With sodden garments, reeking wet
With precious sweat, that slowly glides
Adown his breast and heaving sides;
With swinging swish of heavy pick
His blows are falling fast and thick
Upon the hard, unyielding rock,
That all his efforts seem to mock
And bar his way to precious bread
By which his little ones are fed.

In stooping posture, bending low,
See how he swings him to and fro;
Till rock in splinters flies around,
And burning sparks, with hissing sound,
Dart here and there, like meteors bright,
Athwart the gloomy face of night.
Enshrouded, 'midst the dust and haze,
His smoky lamp seems all ablaze;
Its crusted wick and lengthened flame
All unmistakably proclaim
The lack of pure and healthy air
That silently the lungs impair.

Anon, he wipes his grimy face
And snatches just a breathing space
To stretch his limbs and quickly eat

His morning's meal, made doubly sweet
By hours of toiling in his might
That whet and spur the appetite.
His cap and lamp are laid aside;
His printed 'kerchief, well supplied
With bread and butter, cake and cheese,
Is spread across his grimy knees.
No rich repast, no dainties there,
But plain and honest homely fare,
Washed down with milk or tepid tea,
Renews his lost vitality,
And fits him further in the strife
To battle for the means of life.

With anxious care he looks around,
With ears alert for every sound—
The snapping props, the rumbling din
Of falling rocks, that hem him in;
The deadly gases snake-like hiss
From open seams and crevices;
The beaded damps, that patt'ring drop
From fungus-bearded roof and prop;
Or volley'd blast, with distant boom,
Re-echoing from room to room.

But hark, what sound is that he hears,
That fans to flame his smouldering fears?
    It bursts amidst the gloom
    Like thunderbolt of doom,
    And hurls him, with the shock,
    Against the jaggéd rock.
    He struggles to his feet,

But, ere he can retreat,
A rush of air and dust,
A fearful, whizzing gust
Comes sweeping up the track,
And whirls him on his back.

In agony and pain,
He rallies once again
And runs, with frantic speed,
To meet the wild stampede
Of miners, half attired.
"Oh, God! the pit has fired,"
He shrieks in wild dismay,
And hurries on his way,
In breathless, eager haste,
Thro' ruin wild and waste,
O'er twisted, riven rails
And broken brattice deals
That, littered, lie around.
He clears them with a bound
And ploughs his way across
Great wreaths of drifted dross.

On hands and knees he creeps
O'er rugged, rocky heaps,
Thro' water, slush, and mud,
Till, drenched with sweat and blood,
All bruised, and sore distressed,
With wildly heaving breast,
Still groping all the way,
At last the light of day
Appears upon his sight,

Where men in woful plight
And helpless youths are found
All wildly crowding round,
With agonising cry,
"O God, and must we die?"

Awhile in abject dread and fear,
All herded close, like stricken deer,
They stand benumbed and stupefied,
Till dauntless Courage, close allied
To craven Fear, resumes her sway
Triumphant o'er the trembling clay;
Then heroes, minus cap or lamp,
Rush bravely thro' the after-damp
To rescue those who, haply, may
Have fallen helpless by the way.

There fathers go to seek their sons
And swell the list of missing ones;
And sons their fathers seek in vain,
While shrieks and groans and cries of pain
Around on every side are heard
From men, with faces scorched and scarred;
With hair all singed from off their heads,
And tattered skin that hangs in shreds,
Like tissue paper, limp and wet,
From arms and limbs as black as jet.

From lamps and flasks is handed round
The ready oil to bathe each wound;
And woollen jackets, scarfs, and caps
Are temporised to serve as haps

To shield them from the frosty air
Till loving hands, with kindly care,
Shall woo them back to health and strength,
Or hap, to linger on at length
In agony till kindly Death
Relieve them of their troubled breath.

O thou, that breath'st the air of heaven,
To whom the blesséd light is given,
The birds, the sunshine, and the flowers
To cheer thee thro' thy waking hours—
If ere Compassion's kindly ray
Illume thy breast, and points the way
To Mercy; then in Mercy's name,
In trumpet tones aloud proclaim
The wrongs and sufferings of him
Who toils in caverns, foul, and grim,
Far down the deep, dark-throated mine,
Debasing soul and form divine.

'Tis not the struggle of a day,
Nor glory won in single fray,
But silent valour of a life
That marks the hero in the strife.
'Tis he who battles bravely on,
When life and hope are almost gone,
With Mother Earth until she yields
The treasures of her mines and fields,
To keep in comfort and in life
His brothers fainting in the strife.

Then honour to whom honour's due—
The brave, the valiant, and the true;

Those men of ruggéd, sterling worth
Who disembowel Mother Earth,
And give the products of her womb
To cheer us through a world of gloom.

BEELZEBUB'S ADDRESS TO A RICH PHARISEE.

Thou art gentle and meek as a lamb
On the lea,
A solace, a comfort, and balm
Unto me;
For thou beareth the blame,
The sin, and the shame,
That hath sullied thy name,
All for me,
Dost thou see,
My sins have been fathered on thee.

Thou art free from all blemish and taint,
I confess.
Thou'rt a martyr, a hero, and saint,
Nothing less:
For who dare impeach
What thy ministers teach,
And evangelists preach
Thro' the press,
Heaven bless
The labours of pulpit and press.

Thou preachest the Gospel to me,
And to mine;
The Gospel according to thee,
And to thine.
Thou shalt wring from thy neighbour
The fruits of his labour,
At the point of the sabre,
And shine,
Amidst thine,
As a light and a glory divine.

Tho' the wicked may question thy claim
To a crown;
May slander and sully thy name
Up and down.
Still they cannot deny
Thou'rt a Christian. Ay,
Of the veriest dye,
In the town,
Up or down;
Of the veriest dye in the town.

Thou hast given to the heathen abroad
Of thy pelf;
To the honour and glory of God—
And thyself.
For which thou art given
A soul newly shriven,
And a bond over Heaven
For thyself—
Lucky elf;
Thou'st a mortgage on Heaven for thyself.

Aside.
You must give to the Devil his due:
If you do
In the end I am sure to have you
And your crew:
Till then fare thee well,
I will meet you in Hell,
Where damn'd devils yell
And halloo,
Ages thro';
Where damn'd devils yell and halloo.

MICHAEL SHAW.

Auld Nature has made ye a man,
Michael Shaw,
On the honest and sensible plan,
Michael Shaw.
She has stamped on her wark
Baith her name and her mark;
Has gifted ye wi' a bit spark,
Michael Shaw,
O' her ain native fire, a bit spark.

Tho' to learning ye canna lay claim,
Michael Shaw,
To be honest was ever your aim,
Michael Shaw.

Ye hae havins and mense,
Ye hae gumption and sense,
Yet withoot ony show or pretence,
Michael Shaw;
Withoot ayther show or pretence.

Tho' nayther a sinner nor saunt,
Michael Shaw,
Ye are free frae a' worldly cant,
Michael Shaw.
Aye, and nearer to grace,
And yon coveted place,
Than the feck o' the sanctified race,
Michael Shaw;
Than the feck o' the sanctified race.

It's no' in your heart to be mean,
Michael Shaw.
Ye wad scorn to mak' use o' a frien',
Michael Shaw.
Nae hypocrite knave,
To cringe or to crave,
Or be ony ane's servant or slave,
Michael Shaw;
Ye wad scorn to be ony man's slave.

You've laid doon a law for yoursel',
Michael Shaw,
And a' wha come under your spell,
Michael Shaw.
Ye snub and ye snool

Baith the rogue and the fool,
When they dinna conform to your rule,
Michael Shaw;
When they dinna fa' in wi' your rule.

Ye are fond o' a crack and a smoke,
Michael Shaw,
O' a sang, or an innocent joke,
Michael Shaw.
But the vulgar and lewd
Ye hae strictly tabooed,
As an honest and dacent man should,
Michael Shaw;
As an honest and dacent man should.

Ye don't judge a man by his coat,
Michael Shaw,
By the siller or gear he has got,
Michael Shaw.
For ye'll joke and ye'll crack
Wi' a tramp or a quack,
Tho' he hadna a coat to his back,
Michael Shaw;
Tho' he hadna a coat to his back.

Ye are doon on the stuipit and dull,
Michael Shaw,
On the feckless that's wantin' in wull,
Michael Shaw;
And the ignorant youth,
Wi' his mainners uncouth,

Gets the very warst word oot your mooth,
Michael Shaw;
Gets the very warst word oot your mooth.

And yet ye are couthie and kind,
Michael Shaw.
To charity ever inclined,
Michael Shaw.
You've the knack and the airt
O' concealing the pairt
That you play wi' your big open heart,
Michael Shaw;
That ye play wi' your big open heart.

When Nature comes back for her ain,
Michael Shaw,
And ye thro' the shadows hae gane,
Michael Shaw.
Whaur the life is complete—
There, if ever we meet,
We are willing to sit at your feet,
Michael Shaw;
We are willing to sit at your feet.

SONG.

In the Spring o' the year, in her innocent glee,
With never a hum, nor a hech, nor a howe,
A lassie sat singing licht-hearted and free,
And the grass it grows green on the bonnie Witch-knowe.

In the Simmer, a lassie sat milking her kye,
  Wi' a hum, and a ha, and a hech, and a howe,
"I'm a wearifu' wanter," she said with a sigh,
  And the grass it grows green on the bonnie Witch-
    knowe.

The Autumn has come, and the Simmer has gane,
  With a hum, and a ha, and a hech, and a howe,
The lassie sits sighing and sabbin' her lane,
  And the grass it lies withered on bonnie Witch-
    knowe.

The Winter has come wi' it's cauld, icy breath,
  With a plague tak' the wooer that's broken his vow,
The lassie is lodged in the cauld hoose o' death,
  And the snaw it lies deep on the bonnie Witch-
    knowe.

WARFARE.

Kissed by the amorous sun,
  We spring from out the night,
All eager, every one,
  For life, for love, and light.

While longingly we gaze
  Aloft, thro' the weeping mist,
We dream of happier days
  In a world removed from this,

The phantom, Death, appears.
  His all-devouring form,
Awakes our craven fears,
  And rings our souls' alarm.

With every nerve and limb
  Strained for the coming strife,
We grapple and close with him
  For life, Eternal Life;

Till backwards borne to earth,
  Pierc'd by the shaft of Fate,
Our red life rushes forth
  In warm, tempestuous spate.

Forth from the reeking trench,
  With loud, avenging cry,
We sweep, like an avalanche,
  To death, or victory.

Our fighting souls, bedight
  With gleaming sword of faith,
Battle for the right
  With all the hosts of Death.

Fell Doubt, and dark Despair,
  Reel from our vengeful blade,
Back thro' the stifling air,
  All vanquished and dismayed,

On thro' the sullen grave,
  And Hell's devouring depths
We rush where spirits rave
  In endless drear eclipse;

We charge the dusky hordes
  That, shrieking, swarm around,
Slaking our thirsty swords
  In many a weeping wound.

Emerging from the fight,
  All drenched with blood and tears,
Far up the sun-kissed height,
  A welcome form appears,

And hails us with acclaim:
  "Let all who hear My voice
Arise in Victory's name,
  Sing praises and rejoice.

Those weary, prisoned souls
  Have earned their own release,
And bravely won the goal
  Of everlasting peace."

HE'S NAE MAN AVA.

Men who are honest, are upricht and true,
Will never want backin' to cairry them thro';
But gin they descend to the craft and the tricks
O' the base and ignoble, or meddle and mix
Wi' the schules and the cliques wha hae nae moral law,
They're past a' redemption, they're nae men ava—
Nae men ava,
Nae men ava,
They're past a' redemption, they're nae men ava.

The man that wad truckle for favour, and fawn
On the vulgar and wealthy, for siller and lan';
Wad gae doon on his knees to the lords o' the soil,
And think himsel' pey'd wi' a nod or a smile;
Or rin like a dog at their beck and their ca',
He's a puir silly mortal, he's nae man ava—
Nae man ava,
Nae man ava,
He's a puir silly mortal, he's nae man ava.

There's a man—ye will meet him at every spree,
Whaur the supper and drink and the fiddler are free,
Wha wi' richest o' wines will slocken his thirst,
And eat o' the best till he's liken tae burst;
What he canna devour he will cairry awa';
He's a mean-hearted scunge, O he's nae man ava—
Nae man ava,
Nae man ava,
He's a mean-hearted scunge, O he's nae man ava.

A man that's supposed to hae gumption and sense,
Wha will sit doon and drink at a neebor's expense,
And blether and talk in this kin' o' key,
"Mind, there's no monie men in the pairish like me,
Tho' I say it mysel', and I'm no gi'en tae blaw";
He's a weed, he's a wastrel, he's nae man ava—
Nae man ava,
Nae man ava,
He's a weed, he's a wastrel, he's nae man ava.

There's the man that will stop ye and crack for a spell
'Bout this thing, and that, when ye're wi' himsel';
But meet him wi' friens o' position and place,
It's a different maitter—it alters the case;
He will turn up his nose at a being sae sma';
He's a fraud, he's a noodle, he's nae man ava—
Nae man ava,
Nae man ava,
He's a fraud, he's a noodle, he's nae man ava.

A man that will carelessly squander his means,
And leeve on his neebors, his folks, and his frien's;
Wha neither will work, no, nor yet will he want,
Tho' the siller be scarce and the leevin' be scant;
Wha maun hae his meals tho' the heavens should fa';
He's a leech, he's a loafer, he's nae man ava—
Nae man ava,
Nae man ava,
He's a leech, he's a loafer, he's nae man ava.

A man wha pretends he can han'le his fists,
And will brag o' the men he has met in the lists;
O' the men he has licked in a fair staun-up fecht
That were bigger than he is, maist dooble his wecht;
Nae maitter hoo lood or hoo crouse he may craw,
He's a hen-hearted wakelin, he's nae man ava—
Nae man ava,
Nae man ava,
He's a hen-hearted wakelin, he's nae man ava.

Then here's tae the man that is honest and fair
In his dealing wi' ithers, tho' humble and puir;
He has riches in store that the base canna claim;
The true current coin of an honest man's name,
That time winna tarnish or thieves steal awa';
He's a man amang men, he's the king o' us a'—
King o' us a',
King o' us a',
He's a man amang men, he's the king o' us a'.

TRUTH: AN ALLEGORY.

Once, in the vigour of Manhood's youth,
I woo'd me a maiden whose name was Truth—
A Heaven-born maiden, with eyes of light
That seemed to say, if I read aright,
"Woo me and win me; if not, thy doom
Is that of a soul in eternal gloom;
Seek me aright, and, for ever and aye,
Dwell in the light of eternal day."

My amorous soul, in its longing desire
For the fulness of life, for something higher
Than self, and its struggling, wild unrest,
That lay like a nightmare upon my breast,
Besought her, with many a tear and sigh,
To look on my suit with a kindly eye.
But ever from me, with averted gaze,
She turned to the light, to the solar rays,
And, pointing me upwards, she thus essayed
To read me a riddle, this mystic maid:

"The wise man arises, on wings of Faith,
Thro' chaos and gloom, corruption and death,
To a purer knowledge of spiritual things;
But the fool ever lags on the drowsy wings
Of half-fledged trust, 'tween earth and heaven,
Unsated, unholy, with soul unshriven."
So saying, she fled like a phantom of air,
Fled from me hither, I knew not where.

Eager to find her, I hurried to trace
Her wandering footsteps from place to place;
I ranged the world from Pole to Pole;
I peered into every cranny and hole—
In the hermit's cave and the convent cell,
Where Truth and Light are supposed to dwell:
But never a vestige, and never a sign
Of her who had taken my peace of mind.

I sought her in palace, I sought her in cot,
Thro' streets, lanes, and alleys, but found her not;
In the homes of Science, the halls of Art,

The crowded Exchange, and the busy Mart;
The Senate, the Manse, and the House of God,
Where she used to reign with triumphant rod;
And I cried aloud in my wild despair—
"Truth, O Truth, my treasure, my care,
Come back o'er the dreary and desolate waste:
I perish, I sink, O haste, make haste!"
But a voice replied in my famishing ear,
"She has gone; she has long been a stranger here."

Baffled and foiled, dejected, oppress'd,
Weary and worn with my fruitless quest,
I at length returned to my native home,
No more to wander, no more to roam;
And there, on reaching my journey's end,
I found her at last in the breast of my friend.

OOR AULD MITHER.

O it's when we get mairrie't and settled in life,
It's then we maun luk to oor weans and oor wife;
But if sae we be men that are worthy the name,
We widna neglect oor auld mither at hame—
Oor kindly auld mither,
Oor couthie auld mither,
Forsake a'thegither oor mither at hame.

O, a wife may be mindfu', and tenty, nae doot,
When we're thrivin' and weel, when we're up and
aboot;
But when laid on oor back wi' oor face to the wa',
We'll fin' that oor mither's the best frien' of a'—
Oor kindly auld mither,
Oor couthie auld mither,
She's jist a'thegither the best frien' of a'.

O, a man may get thowless and lose a' respect
For himsel' and his faim'ly through drink and neglect,
Degraded and hopeless that mortal may be,
Yet still he's the licht o' his auld mither's e'e—
His kindly auld mither,
His couthie auld mither,
He's jist a'thegither the licht o' her e'e.

O, it's gin we hae siller, and hooses, and lan',
Wi' servants to rin at oor beck and comman';
Were we lord o' the Heilan's or Lowlan's sae braw,
Gin we're bad to oor mither, we're nae men ava—
Oor kindly auld mither,
Oor couthie auld mither,
Were we ill tae oor mither we're nae men ava.

Langsyne, when bit callans, it's little we thocht
O' the care she had ower us, hoo eydent she wrocht,
Frae mornin' tae nicht, baith at hame and afiel',
Tae keep us in parritch, in milk, and in meal—
Did oor kindly auld mither,
Oor couthie auld mither,
We'll ne'er get anither to tend us sae weel.

Hoo she fed us, and cled us, and kept us for years
In duddies o' claes wi' her needle and shears,
And hoo prood we were then when oor moleskins we
got,
Or a jaicket made oot o' oor faither's auld coat
By oor kindly auld mither,
Sae thrifty and clever,
Wad mak' us a jaicket oot faither's auld coat.

When, wearied wi' rakin' the wuds and the fiel's,
We cam' hirplin' hame on oor taes or oor heels,
Wi' a thorn in oor fit, or a wee bit o' gless,
Wi' her needle she kindly relieved oor distress—
Oor kindly auld mither,
Oor couthie auld mither,
Was ready, aye ready, tae ease oor distress.

When Winter cam' on wi' its trouble and skaith,
When chitterin' wi' caul' and maist chakit to death,
Hoo we danced on the flair, hoo we sabbit and grat,
Till oor hauns they were rubbit and row'd in her brat
By oor kindly auld mither,
Oor couthie auld mither,
Oor hauns she would rub them and row in her brat.

Then be guid to oor mither, and proodly provide
A bit biel o' her ain, whaur the buddie can bide,
Wi' a mouthfu' o' meat, and some duddies o' claes,
To keep her in comfort the rest o' her days—
Oor kindly auld mither,
Oor couthie auld mither,
To keep her in comfort the rest o' her days.

For when deid and awa', O what wad we no gie
For the soun' o' her voice, for ae glance o' her e'e!
Jist to meet her ance mair in the flesh whaur we staun,
And say, "Mither, we like ye, come gie us your haun'—
You're oor kindly auld mither,
Oor couthie auld mither,
You're jist a'thegither the best in the lan'."

A WORK OF NATURE.

Auld Nature ae nicht in her warkshop abune
Sat plying her trade by the licht o' the mune.
The times they were busy, and there was a dearth
O' mortals doon by on the face o' the earth;
For the very last order despatched to the same,
A' stamped and impressed wi' her seal and her name,
Had turned oot a set o' the scurviest messans
That ever polluted the earth wi' their presence—
They'd taen a' to swindlin', to leein', and cheatin',
To gamblin' and bettin', to grindin' and sweatin',
To gorgin', devourin', to sweerin' and theft,
To drink and debauchery; till a' that was left
Was a mass o' corruption, Auld Satan himsel'
Wad consider too bad for the dung-heap o' Hell.

On being advised o' this state of affairs
By her trusty informant, the "Spirit of Air,"
She muttered, "Confoond it. I don't unerstaun',

For the life o' me, hoo they've gane wrang on her
haun'.
I'm shuir they were weel eneuch seasoned wi' soul
To keep them frae rottin', to guaird and control
Their animal passions, till death should allay
Their feverish pulse, in the natural way.
But fules will be fules, and they should suffer for't,
They've sunk doon the god-like and steer'd up the dirt
In their natures, in spite o' the precepts I'd given
To guide them thro' life and direct them to Heaven."

Thus musing she sat when an order cam' hence
To spare neither trouble nor time nor expense
In fashionin' ane that wad leaven the batch,
Ane that wad be for corruption a match—
Wad get the ill rascals, in order ance mair,
For the limited time they wad likely be there.
She closed wi' the offer at ance, and began
To fashion and shape oot her ideal man.
She carefully picked her, frae oot o' the rest,
A soul o' the brichtest, the purest and best;
She furbished it up, and she wrapped it in clay
O' the best she had handlet for monie a day.

She turned oot a mortal o' havins and sense,
Ane that hated like pushion a' sham and pretence;
A warm-hearted fallow wha lo'ed a bit joke,
But firm in his duty, aye, firm as a rock;
Wi' habits as reg'lar's the sun i' the lift,
And method and order and monie a gift.
She turned him aroun' and she viewed him wi' pride,
Wi' bosom elated, exultingly cried,

"I've made me a man, should I ne'er mak' anither,
And ane that I'm prood I can claim as a brither,"
Then aff she despatched him to earth for a whyle,
Whar he sune becam' famous as Tummas Carlyle.

SIMMER.

When the meadows, in their daffin'
And their fun,
Hae burst their sides wi' lauchin
At the sun;
When the gowden glint and glimmer,
O' the bonnie sun o' Simmer,
Wi' its winkin' sheen and shimmer,
Has begun,

I like to gang a-roamin',
Frae the toun,
Jist a wee afore the gloamin'
Settles doon;
When the floo'rs are gaily springin',
And the wuds are loodly ringin'
Wi' the birdies sweetly singin'
A' in tune;

When the shadows lie a-slantin'
At my feet,
And the mavis in the plantin'
Whustles sweet;

Whaur the lintie's singin' bonnie,
In as blithe a strain as onie,
To his mate and bosom cronie,
Tweet a weet;

When the drowsy bee is dronin'
Oot the oors,
In yonder shady loanin'
Mang the floo'rs;
Whaur the bonnie yellow gowan
And the buttercup is growin'
'Neath the hazel and the rowan's
Leafy boo'rs—

To listen to the burnie,
In its glee,
As it bickers on its journey,
Wild and free,
Thro' mossy dell and dingle,
Over rocky shale and shingle,
Till its waters meet and mingle
Wi' the sea;

When ilka thing in reason
Seems to say:
Enjoy the Simmer season
While you may;
For Pleasure's airy bubble
Will burst and bring you trouble,
Ere the back is bent and double
Wi' decay.

THE AULD COLLYER.

I'm a collyer, ye'll see it's the case
By the marks and the aars on my face;
See my knuckles a' gashed,
Hoo they're hackit and hashed,
Wi' the wark I hae wrocht at the face,
In my place,
Thro' workin' my wark at the face.

But I'm no jist sae able and fit
Noo for howkin' my darg in the pit;
But they've gi'en me a bell,
Doon the dook for mysel',
Whar, snug in a corner, I sit;
When I'm fit,
I'm chappin' the bell in the pit.

If I rise in the mornings ava,
Like a puddock I puff and I blaw,
Till I get, d'ye see?
A bit moothfu' o' tea,
Or a dram—it's the best o' them a'—
Maybe twa;
Jist tae clear the defluction awa'.

Dod, I ance was as soople's a leek,
And as gleg as the best on the cleek;
Noo I'm feckless and dune,
Thro' the want o' the win',
And I've lost a' the red aff my cheek;
Pouther reek,
Man, it sune tak's the red aff your cheek.

In my youth I hae wrocht at the wark
Till the sweat ye could wring oot my sark;
Frae morning tae nicht,
Never seein' daylicht—
Na, nor hearing the sang o' the lark,
At my wark;
The blythe merry sang o' the lark.

When wages were big, I may say
That I never was idle a day;
And I made, let me see,
For the callan and me,
Aye the feck o' a poun' every day;
I may say,
The feck o' a note every day.

I had aften to plowter and wade
Amang water wharever I gaed;
Aye, and swallow black damp,
And the reek aff my lamp,
That, at times, wad hae pushioned a taed;
I'm afraid,
Wad hae pushioned and chokit a taed.

Coming hame every nicht, to, as black,
And as sair as I'd been on the rack;
Baith weary and wat,
And as waik as a cat;
And wi' no a dry steek on my back;
It's a fact,
Wi' scarce a dry steek on my back.

This worl' tae me, I declare,
'S jist a great mickle pit fu' o' care;
Fu' o' trouble and strife,
Whar the lamp o' my life
Winna burn for the want o' the air;
I declare,
For the want o' the bonnie fresh air.

But I'm maist dune wi' trouble and skaith,
For sune the auld bottomer, Death,
Will signal tae Him,
On the hill up abune,
That a collyer is drawin' his graith;
In the faith
O' a place owre the water o' death.

TO A FREEN.

Dear Johnnie,—I tak' up my pen
To ca' the crack, an' let ye ken
That I am weel, as weel can be;
An' fondly hope that sae are ye.
For what is waur than loss o' health?
I'm certain, no the loss o' wealth;
For wealth is aft as big a curse
To mortals as the empty purse.
It's aye a kittle naig to ride,
Camsteerie, skeigh, an' ill to guide.
Jist gie her heid-room, an' she'll pitch

Ye owre her shouther in the ditch;
Whar ye may lie an' lick your sairs
For onything the worl' cares.

But haud her in, an' keep her ticht,
E'en let her prance wi' a' her micht,
Till ance you're past the ugly ditches,
An' safely on the road to riches;
Then every gate's thrown open wide
To speed ye in your pleasant ride,
Until ye reach your destination,
'Midst cheers and shouts o' acclamation.

But, after a', Lord keep us free
Frae either wealth or poverty.
A something jist between the twa
Extremes wad suit us best of a';
Whar we could sit and view the strife,
Content an' satisfied wi' life.
It's no that ye wad ere abuse
The gowden mercies meant for use;
But aye, I'm sure, wad cleed and feed
The hungry, naked in their need;
An' thus augment your happiness
By helping ithers in distress.
A' ither selfish ways are vain,
An' bring us nocht but grief an' pain,

But whit need I begin to preach
To ane mair qualified to teach
In sic-like maitters than mysel'?

God knows I'm no (the truth to tell)
Owre mickle gi'en to charity;
But then I haena much to gie.
But still, when want is pressing sair,
I aye contrive to gie my share;
Although it may be jist a groat
Beside his Lordship's five-poun' note.
Wha kens but I may, up abune,
Get credit for't as weel as him.

It isna jist the value o'
Your contribution, certes, no,
But mair the way in whilk it's gi'en,
That marks the sympathetic frien'.
A wee thing comin' frae the heart,
That's free frae every selfish airt,
Is charity, when poun's are no
That's gi'en wi' great parade an' show.
If man frae evil wad abstain,
He maun dae guid, for guid alane;
But if he maun hae recompense,
There's surely, to a man o' sense,
Sufficient in the pride that springs
From doing, quietly, noble things.

But here, methinks, the worl' will say,
"This kin' o' teachin' winna dae,
For mense an' sense alike proclaim
That charity begins at hame.
An' selfishness, tho' ye misca't,
Ye shouldna set it doon at naught;

It's aye the motive that impels
Us mortals on to help oorsels;
It nerves us on to emulate
The rich, the wealthy, an' the great,
By strivin' wi' them for a place
O' honour in the gowden race.
So selfishness, ye see, in ithers
Is charity untae his brithers."

But, Johnnie, lad, whate'er betide,
We winna mak' the worl' oor guide,
But trust the teachin's o' the heart,
An' strive to act the manly pairt.
Let ithers scheme to get the grup
O' Mammon's bonnie gowden whup,
Wi' whilk to lash their fellow-man,
An' gar him dae the best he can
For them an' theirs; we'll ne'er demean
Oorsels by this; no, no, my frien'.
We'll never prostitute our natures
By grinding doon oor fellow-creatures;
But help them, baith by word an' deed,
If, haply, they should be in need.
It's always better in the en'
Tae dae the richt, ye may depen';
The sympathetic, kindly act is
Jist religion put in practice.

A man may be a Turk, a Quaker,
Or Hottentot, it doesna maitter;
As lang's he has the feelin' heart,

An' acts the kindly neebor pairt,
He's nearer far, in my opinion,
Untae yon blissfu' bricht dominion,
Than they wha never miss a Sunday
At the kirk, but on the Monday
Cheat an' lee like kintry coupers,
Prick-the-loops, or coonter-loupers;—
Dissembling, smooth-faced hypocrites,
Unsanctified religious cheats.
What starve the guid an' feed the evil
Within their breists to serve the Deevil,
An' mak' theirsel's a leevin' tomb
Wherein their moral selves are doomed
To lie an' rot amang the dust;
A prey to worms o' worl'ly lust.

O Heaven, preserve us in the faith,
An' save us frae this moral death,
In whilk the ghouls o' black remorse
Envenomed gnaw the leevin' corse;
An' prey upon the peace o' mind
O' those by nature guid an' kind!
An' we will leeve in hope, and pray
There yet will come anither day
When man will dae untae his brithers
As he himsel' wad aye hae ithers
Dae to him; an' no forever
Waste his life in vain endeavour.

Though Hope, at times, may fib and lee,
And cheat us wi' her sophistry,
We winna blame her for the fraud,

But ever kiss and hug the jaud.
We'll no', like ithers, girn an' gowl,
But patiently possess our sowl,
Till yonder Sun o' love an' licht
Shall chase awa' the clouds o' nicht;
An' melt an' thaw the frosts o' hate,
Till love rins in a glorious spate,
Thro' a' its channels to the sea,
O' broad an' deep fraternity.

So hoping health an' peace o' mind
May yet be yours, until resigned
Ye yield your breath an' quat the scene
'S the earnest wish of him, your frien'.

THE AULD HOOSE AT THE RAW.

O weel dae I mind when I leeve't at the Raw
Wi' my faither and mither, noo deid and awa',
Ere my brithers and sisters had left us and gane
Oot to service, or else to a hoose o' their ain.
There were Robin and Sannie, and Davie, and Jock,
And Jamie and Geordie, the lamb o' the flock;
There were Nannie and Leezie, the youngest of a',
Wi' my faither and mither, a' leeve't at the Raw.

The hoose it was laigh and weel covered wi' thack,
Wi' a lang thro'-gaun entry that led to the back;
Twa beds in the kitchen, and ane up the laft,

And twa in the entry, weel oot o' the draught,
Wi' sliding door panels that, when you were ill,
You could open and shut at your pleasure or will.
'Twas only a kitchen—a but and a ben
Was considered genteel amang colliers then;
But still it was hame, and a pailace to me,
Tho' a ramshacled biggin', auld-fashioned and wee.
'Twas plenished and furnished wi' a' kin' o' gear,
O' usefu' material fitting for wear;
An oak-painted dresser, weel-stockit wi' delf,
Had a raw o' gilt jugs, a' arranged on the shelf.
There were auld-fashioned plates on the rack up abune,
And, atween them, a pewter, or mickle horn spune;
Sugar tangs, toddy ladle, and ony nick-nack
That wasna in use, were put up in the rack.
There were basins and bowls, o' the queerest design,
That had been on the dresser since ever I've min';
There were monie braw things, but the grandest o' a'
Were the mickle blue trenchers that stood in a raw
Lukin' doon frae their places, the uppermost shelf,
Like ministers blessing the lave o' the delf.
We'd a braw chest o' drawers, and a cupboard that sat
In a corner, filled fu' o'—I kenna weel what,
O' broken dram glesses and cheeney, nae doot;
Some wantin' the han'les, some wantin' the spoot,
Whilk my mither wad guaird wi' a miserly care,
Because they were grannie's and gran'faither's ware.

'Tween the dresser and drawers, wi' its back to the wa',

Wi' a nail driven thro' it for fear it should fa',
Stood the big aucht-day nock, ance the glory and pride
O my faither and mither, and monie beside.
For monie a year it had stood in its place,
Lukin' doon on us a', wi' it's bonnie roun' face,
As muckle's to say, "There is reason and rhyme
Wi' a nock in the hoose that can tell ye the time."
Tho' hauf-an-oor forrit and mair by the toun,
It had waggit awa', and was never run doon,
Thro' simmer and winter, thro' sunshine and rain:
Thro' trouble and sorrow, thro' pleasure and pain;
And it seemed to me then, as the oors flew alang,
It was singing a hamely bit lilt o' a sang.
But, noo that I'm wrinkled and grey is my heid,
It soun's to me mair like a dirge for the deid.
It's voice seems the voice of a far-awa frien',
The echoes o' whilk bring the tears to my een,
And fill me wi' thochts o' the couthie and kin'
Auld folk that were leevin' in days o' langsyne.
In a neuk stood my mither's big napery press,
Whar, hidden awa' in its deepest recess,
Was linen, we younkers ken't naething aboot,
That was keepit for dressing and laying ye oot;
Whilk a neebor wad aften, wi' tears in her een,
Come in for the len' o', to lay oot a frien',
A brither or sister, or haply a douce
Auld mither or faither, the heid o' the hoose.

Ae nicht I jaloused there was trouble in store;
At the deid oor o' nicht cam' a chap at the door.
My mither was sleeping, but rase and gaed but;

There was twa three words said, then the door it
was shut.
In a wee, she cam' ben, and to faither she says,
" Come, Davie, get up, man, and on wi' yer claes;
Auld Rab's won awa—for the strauchtin' brod, rin;
Get up, man, and on wi' your claes and your shoon."
Then up gat my faither, and hurried awa
Thro' the cauld blashy nicht; thro' the sleet and the
snaw,
On his erran' o' mercy—he couldna dae less,
To help an auld neebor in time o' distress.
Then my mither wi' something row'd up in her brat—
A mysterious bundle o' weel I kent what,
Slippet cannily oot o' the hoose and was gane,
And left me there lying sae eerie and lane.

For oors I lay shakin' wi' terror and dreid,
Wi' the blankets and cov'rin' drawn up ower my
heid;
I cooriet in closer to Jamie and Jock,
My brithers, wha lay atween me and the stock.
I daurna luk oot, lest I'd see in the dark
Auld Robin laid oot in his burial sark;
Or the ghost o' the beggar that dee't in the snaw,
That cauld Winter nicht, at the en' o' the Raw;
Or the tramp that lay doon on the road wi' fatigue,
And was killed by the wheels o' the farrier's gig;
Or the hapless young man, wi' the bluid rinnin' doon
Frae a gash in his neck, frae the cauld chisel woun';
Or the murderer there, wi' his mouth wide agape
And his tongue hingin' oot, at the en' o a raipe;
Or maybe the corpse o' the bonnie wee wean

That the tinkler had smothered—by chance overlain,
Ae nicht as unconscious, and helpless she lay,
Thro' the drink she had ta'en in the coorse o' the day.
And the frichsomest stories cam' intae my heid,
'Boot robbers and burkers, and lifting the deid;
And mysterious coaches a' muffled and shod
To deafen the soun' o' their wheels on the road.
And hoo uncle Rab and my faither, ae nicht,
When watching the deid, got a wonnerfu' fricht
Wi' a ghaist lukin' in thro the roun' peen o' gless
O their wee wudden house, that was mair like a press,
Or a great mickle kist staunin' up on its en',
Than a shelter at nicht for a couple o' men.

Then I thocht hoo my brither had gotten a fricht
Wi' the story that Teenie had tauld him ae nicht,
'Boot auld Neck-a-jee, wi' the snawy white beard,
Wha leev't by himsel' roun' ahint the kirkyaird,
In a tumble-doon biggin' o' dyvots and stanes,
'Mang auld moolie coffins and rotten shank banes;
Hoo every nicht, at the chap o' the bell,
He gaed oot to the graveyard, alane by himsel',
And howk'd up the deid wi' his lang finger nails,
And worried them up, stump and rump, at his meals—
Baith big folk and wee folk, men, women, and weans,
Till the flesh was beginning to creep on my banes.
And I saw, in the darkness, the deil—or his frien',
Auld Neckie himsel' wi' his big glowerin' een;

And I tried hard to skreigh, but the soun' wadna
come
Till the win' blew a handfu' o' soot doon the lum;
Then burst frae my lips sic a skreigh o' despair
As gart a' my brithers jump oot on the flair.

Next morning—I mind o't as weel as yestreen—
Their blind was drawn doon, and I saw the white
screen
On the window, that tauld o' a death in the hoose,
And a' was as quate and as still as a moose.
That morning my faither was hame frae the pit,
For he happened to meet wi' a woman barefit,
Whilk bode him nae guid, so he didna gae doon;
'Boot the doors and dykebacks he was hingin'
aroun'
In his troosers and sark, wi' his pipe in his jaw,
As aft was the custom langsyne at the Raw.
The neebors were whispering, ane to anither;
There were auld Mrs Booie, and Jen, and my mither,
And Leezie next door, a' in earnest confab
'Boot maitters concerning the death o' auld Rab.
My mither was saying, "I dreedit it aye
That a something extraornar, and oot o' the wey,
Wad happen ere lang, tho' I couldna tell what,
For owre my left shouther I saw a black cat;
Forbye, at the gloamin', a wee ere the dark,
Fower pyots I saw up in Staneyhill Park;
And whit made me certain the mair it wad come
Oor cyaw had been sitting a' day on their lum,
And persisted in sitting in spite of us a',

Tho' the callans had staned it to fricht it awa."
"I dreedit mysel' there was trouble in store
O' some kin' or ither," quo' Leezie, next door,
"For jist aboot bed-time I gaed to bring in
The rakin' coal, after my airnin' was dune,
When wha should I see but auld Rab, or his wraith,
Staun gapin' wi' asthma, and gaspin' for breath;
I saw him as plain, aye as plain as ye like,
As he stood wi' his airms leaning owre the stane dyke;
And I spak to him tae, but an answer got nane,
And the next time I lukit, losh me! he was gane;
And I said to mysel', as the hoose I cam' in,
That's a warning, I'm shuir, if there ever was ane."
"'Deed aye, 'twas a warning, I dootna," quo' Jen,
"An' ane that betokened the man's hinner-en';
For Towser was yowlin' the feck o' the nicht,
Frae we gaed to oor bed till the break o' daylicht;
Was yowlin' and howlin' wi' peetifu' mane,
As if the puir beastie was suffering pain;
And brawly ye ken, it is said, when they howl
Thro' the nicht, there's the passing o' somebody's sowl.
It's no sae lang syne, you will mind o' it yet,
When the three men were droon't wi' the waste in the pit,
Hoo Towser bred sic a narration and din
Ye'd a thocht that the ruif o' the hoose wad come in.
That nicht there was nane o' us sleepit a wink—
Fegs! there's mair in their yowlin' than some o' us think."

The neebors wad meet, on occasion, and staun,
Ilk her airms in her brat, or a stoup in her haun,
By the auld water barrel, at the cheek o' the door;
Or aiblins they'd gather, a merry-gaun core,
In oor hoose at nicht, when the blind was drawn doon.
Then the crack and the joke and the sang wad gae roun,
And monie a snicher and hearty guffaw
Gart the auld rafters ring in the hoose at the Raw.
If auld Nannie Clark drappit in for a bit,
"Na, woman," she'd say, "I'm no gaunna sit;
I've the pat on the fire, and I jist lukit doon
To speir the richt time. Is your nock wi' the toon?"
"It's hauf-an-oor forrit—you're no gaun awa';
Sit doon for a wee while, a meenit or twa,"
My mither wad say. But auld Nannie wad staun
And crack, wi' the sneck o' the door in her haun,
Until ye wad think she wad never hae dune;
For Nannie could crack, for a full Hieland mune,
'Boot this thing and that—frae the Speech on the Throne
To the slabbing o' shawls, or the baking o' scone.
O' the days o' their daffin, when throuither jauds,
When gilpeys o' lassocks, they ran wi' the lads,
They aften wad speak; or o' tearin' their duds
Wi' rakin' on Sundays the fields and the wuds;
Or hoo oot at nicht ilk wad smuggle her shawl
To gang to a bookin', a spree, or a ball;
Or, likely as no, o' their household affairs—
Their cleaning and scouring and scrubbing o' flairs;
Hoo this ane was airnin', or that ane was thrang

Wi' her cleanin', and up to the elbows amang
Yellow ochre, or whitenin'. Anither, nae doot,
Frae her hinmost bit sapple was just wringing oot
Some twa-three bit duds o' the man's or her ain,
When a neebor cried in "It is smurrin' o' rain."
Hoo this ane was jist gettin' ready to bake—
Was gaun to lay oot twa-three farles o' cake,
When wha should step in, a' the wey frae the Mains,
But her sister and steerin' wee stumpies o' weans;
Or that ane was redding her hoose up a bit,
So ye scarce could get turnin' or steerin' your fit,
When her man and the callans cam' hame frae the pit;
Or anither was busy wi' cloutin' o' claes,
Wi' knittin' or darnin' the heels and the taes
O' her stockin's;—and crack o' a similar kin'
As the neebors wad hae in the days o' langsyne.
And then on occasions the younkers and men
Wad sit on their hunkers aroun' the hoose en';
Or perched on the dyke, in their troosers an' sark,
Wad argue and bargue, or talk o' their wark:
'Boot the howkin' o' coals, or the reddin' o' fa's;
The drivin' o' levels, or cutting o' gaws;
The stowin' o' throu'arts, or laying o' swypes;
'Boot up steps and doon steps, and veezes and lypes;
'Boot boring and stemmin', and firing wi' strum;
'Boot dreggin' and drawin', or fillin' o' gum;
Stuip and room, en' and plane, or o' workin' lang wa';
That whyles cam' abune-board, langsyne at the Raw.

Wi' their auld-warl' notions, and auld-farrant crack,
The neebors are gane, never mair to come back;

The links are a' broken, in life's gowden chain,
That used to connect me wi' frien's that are gane;
And I sit and I dream thro' the lang, weary oors,
O' the hoose at the Raw, wi' its bunker o' floo'rs;
Wi' its bawm, aipple-ringey, and roses that grew
By the window, a' drookit and draiglet wi' dew;
Wi' its wee hollen buss, and its boxwood, sae braw,
That aft was the envy and pride o' the Raw.
And it's O for a sicht o' the auld-farrant place,
The soun' o' a voice, or the glisk o' a face
That aften beamed, kindly, a welcome to me;
Then gladly in comfort and peace I wad dee
If Heaven in its mercy wad tak' me awa'
To leeve wi' my frien's in yon *Hoose at the Raw.*

VISION OF MAMMON.

'Twas eventide; the goddess Night
  Her sable banner had unfurled,
And Morpheus waved his mystic rod
  Victorious o'er a sleeping world.
Drowsing in my chamber lonely,
  In a dream, methought, there came
A voice to me from out the darkness,
  Loudly calling me by name.
"Who art thou?" I cried, upstarting,
  "Com'st thou here as friend or foe,
To comfort or to plague and vex me?
  Is thy mission weal or woe?

If thou be Hope, my banker, kindly
  Come to aid me in distress;
Then I will gladly draw upon thee
  For length of life and happiness.
But be thou Death, that fell destroyer,
  Come to wreck this house of clay,
Leave my presence, ruthless vandal,
  Quickly take thyself away."

Then a burst of hollow laughter
  Rang throughout the peaceful night,
And a being tall and stately,
  Surrounded by a blaze of light,
Stalked into my lonely chamber
  With a swaggering, lordly air.
He seemed to say, "Behold in me
  The lord of all creation fair."
On his head a crown of diamonds
  Glared and glittered; every one
Flashing back its borrowed lustre,
  Like a dewdrop in the sun.
Down his breast a beard of silver
  Hung in tangled, wavy folds
O'er a robe of crimson satin
  Fringed with coins of purest gold.
A mantle of the richest velvet,
  Lined with ermine, swept the floor,
And a heavy gold imperial
  Sceptre in his hand he bore.

"Ghost, or spirit, shade, illusion,
  Whatever title suits thee best,

Why this rash, this rude intrusion?
  Wherefore thus disturb my rest?
If moral ill to me thou mean'st, then
  Get thee hence at once," I said,
" Ere my earnest prayers ascend to
  Heaven's eternal King for aid."
" Fool," he cried, " thy King is powerless,
  He but holds those realms in fee,
For a monarch still more powerful—
  Mighty Mammon, I am he!
King of Kings and Prince of Princes,
  Lord of every tribe and tongue;
My lightest word the mind convinces,
  Everywhere my praise is sung.
I'm the only living Saviour,
  Here on earth I hold my throne;
Thou shalt have no God before me,
  No religion but my own."

" Blasphemous liar! vile apostate!
  Would'st thou thus usurp the place
Of the reigning God of Bethel—
  God of all the human race?
Would'st thou slander thus His people
  By insinuations vile,
That their hearts are penetrable
  To Corruption's golden smile?
Think'st thou I will swear allegiance
  To a low designing cheat,
Whose poison drugs our better natures,
  Plunging us in dark deceit

As deep as hell—the lot and portion
  Of those followers who heed
Thy honied counsels, never dreaming
  Wheresoever they may lead?
No, my troubled soul shall ever
  Turn to Him, the great I Am,
This world's wise and good Physician,
  With His wondrous, healing balm."

"Sceptic, doubter, unbeliever,
  Think before thou hold'st aloof,
Stay thy judgment for a moment
  Till I put thee to the proof."
Here he waved aloft his sceptre,
  And, behold, methought we stood
Upon a hill, whose crest commanded
  A mighty stretch of field and flood.
Lifting up his voice he thundered
  Forth, in loud, commanding tones—
"Arise, ye laggards, from your slumbers;
  Up, ye sluggards, up, ye drones!
The morning breaks and Duty presses,
  Mammon claims his homage due;
Up, my loyal, loving subjects,
  Up, my people, staunch and true."
Then, lo, in answer to his summons,
  Bold chanticleer, with clarion loud,
Awoke the drowsy earth from slumber,
  And a surging, seething crowd
Of hungry mortals rose around us
  With a wild, discordant cry,

Desirous all to catch the brightness
  Of his bold and glittering eye.

Prince and Poet, Peer and Peasant,
  Priest and Beggar, Soldier, Sage,
Statesmen, Merchants, and Physicians,
  Bounding Youth and creeping Age,
Publicans and Brewers, Brokers,
  Gamblers on the Stock Exchange;
From the very highest, downwards
  To the very lowest range,
Each one sought to gain his favour
  In his own peculiar way;
None but put forth some endeavour;
  All were in his hire and pay;
Princes sported in the sunshine,
  Revelled in his golden glance,
Living on the bone and sinew,
  Blood and sweat of ignorance;
Guzzling, drinking, and devouring,
  Licking from his lavish hand
The luscious sap of groaning labour
  Ever at their sweet command;
Till englutted with their pleasures,
  Drunk with lust and base desire,
They reel and sink into corruption,
  Wallowing in dirt and mire.

Poetasters, they amused him,
  Tickled him with ribald rhymes
On beauty, passion, love and fashion,
  Trimmed to suit the hollow times;

Till he laughed in golden guineas
  As he never laughed before;
'Midst the loud applause of ninnies
  Ever ready to encore.
(But, alas! the seer or singer,
  More deserving of renown,
Quietly sweats and quietly labours
  In the shadow of his frown;
Breathing out his soul in verses
  Charged with true poetic fire,
Which burns into the soul of ages,
  Lifting mortals ever higher.)

Preachers knelt and sought his blessing,
  Grovelling in the very dust,
In abject and in meek submission,
  Placing all their hope and trust
In him who held their souls as hostage
  For a little yellow dross,
For a little timely profit
  Losing sight of King and Cross.
Heedless of the strenuous battle
  Of the honest, humble poor,
Leaving them to die like cattle
  On the bleak and barren moor;
Entertaining rank and station
  In the sacred house of God;
Preaching honied consolation
  To the vulgar, monied clod;
Trafficking in heavenly worship,
  Selling to whoe'er will buy,

Absolution and the comforts
  Of the holy sanctuary;
Till Religion (heavenly maiden)
  Blushed, and hid her head in shame,
At the hellish work of Satan,
  Perpetrated in her name.

Statesmen, maddened with ambition,
  Schemed to gain the precious ore;
Filled their coffers to repletion
  From the fulness of his store;
Till they groaned beneath his favours
  In their close captivity,
Writhing round in vain endeavours,
  Struggling, fearing, to be free;
Clinging to the chains that bind them;
  Hugging closely to their breast
The precious links that gall and grind them,
  Robbing them of peace and rest;
Plotting, planning, and intriguing,
  For position, power, and pelf,
With friend and foe at once colleaguing
  In the interests of self;
Framing laws to please the classes;
  Levying taxes, toll, and rates
On the struggling, toiling masses
  When they find themselves in straits;
Till the nations roused to anger
  By those acts of tyranny,
Burst the bonds in which they languish,
  Rise, and leap to anarchy.

Well-fed publicans and brewers,
  Void of honour, love, or truth;
Luring from their sense of duty
  Innocent and guileless youth;
Drugging them with vile decoctions,
  Letting loose their poison flood,
Carrying fever and corruption
  Thro' the channels of the blood;
Sapping healthy constitutions,
  Undermining sense and worth;
Spreading hungry destitution
  O'er a heaven-reflected earth.

Beggars whined on staves and crutches;
  Brokers gambled, merchants lied;
Labour, wriggling in his clutches,
  Fawned around on ever side;
Till deafened by their din and clangour
  He raised his sceptre high in air
And thundered forth in fiercest anger,
  "Back ye wolves, and seek your lair."
Then the surging, selfish rabble
  Turned away, dejected, cowed;
Ceased at once their gusty gabble
  And dispersed, a motley crowd.

Turned he round with proud exulting
  Look upon his brazen face,
"Who is now," he cried, "insulting,
  Slandering the human race?
Where is now your trust in mortal,
  And this King of whom you speak?

See ye not that I'm all-powerful?
  He is impotent and weak;
He is helpless to deliver—
  Free you from a world of cares,
Trust in me your gracious giver,
  I will answer all your prayers;
I will strengthen and uphold you,
  Be your comfort and your stay."

"Never, no!" I answered boldly,
  "Never will I own thy sway,
While the life's blood warms my bosom,
  And while Reason's light doth shine
Thro' the darkness, and illusion,
  With a radiance divine;
While the hope of bliss supernal
  Holds this uplifted soul in thrall,
I will turn to Heaven's Eternal—
  He is still my all in all.
He will yet redeem His people,
  Free them from thy galling yoke,
Lift them from the sloughs of evil,
  And plant their feet upon the rock.

Tho' their lives seem warped and tangled,
  Deep within the troubled breast
Lies the Godlike (passion-strangled),
  Longing after peace and rest.
He will weigh their strong temptation
  'Gainst their weighty deeds of sin,
Reckoning out the soul's salvation
  From the earnestness within.

Tho' apparent dire Disaster
  Meets them in their battles here,
If they fight for Him, the Master,
  If they really are sincere,
He will crown their honest efforts
  With the tribute of His love;
And lead them, when from life dissevered,
  To His blissful home above.

Tho' thy poison, rank and gruesome,
  May weaken and degrade the will,
Still there lives within the bosom
  The germs of truth thou can'st not kill.
Truth and Love are ever blooming
  Sweetly in their native soil—
The virgin breasts of man and woman,
  Sweetening their daily toil.
Mark yon hardy peasants, suckled
  On the lap of Mother Earth,
Thriving on the milk that trickles
  Down her rugged breasts at birth.
In their rough and rude employment
  Gleaning from her fruitful fields,
Health, content, and sweet enjoyment—
  Those, the rich rewards, she yields.

Free from poverty and treasure,
  Soul-corroding care and strife;
Drinking deep in fullest measure
  From the founts of simple life;
Living in the smiling present,
  Pleased with what their labour brings,

They envy not, tho' lowly peasants,
  The grandeur or the wealth of kings.
No sounding titles they inherit,
  Seeking neither place nor power,
Honesty's their mark of merit,
  Nature's noblest, richest dower;
Thus they live with God and Nature,
  Happy in their simple faith,
Trusting in a glorious future
  Far beyond the realms of death."

Baffled in his keen persistence
  To weaken and corrupt my mind,
He turned and vanished in the distance,
  Leaving not a trace behind.
Then I woke to light and reason,
  Human kindness, joy, and truth,
To find those scenes of guilt and treason
  Had graven on my mind this truth—
We can always rise victorious
  Over every earthly ill,
If we firmly wield the glorious
  Sceptre of the mind and will.

MORNIN' AT THE FARM.

The day's begun,
The yellow sun
Is speilin' up the lift;
His beams hae kissed
The meadow mists
That, trailin', rise and drift.

In buss and brake
The birds awake,
And hap frae thorn to thorn;
While, far and near,
Bauld chanticleer
Is tootin' on his horn.

The blue reek comes
Frae cot-house lums
In twisted column shape;
And cottars rise,
And rub their eyes,
Then rax themsel's and gape.

Wi' coats drawn in
Her knees atween,
Auld Betty Macintyre
Is busy at
The parritch pat,
That's sotterin' on the fire.

An orra hen
Steps slowly ben,
Close up to Betty's heel;
Wi' sidelins glance
She waits her chance
To peck the tates o' meal.

The men are oot
To sort, nae doot,
Their horses for the day;
To feed and groom,
Or rub them doon
Wi' wusp o' hey or strae.

Wi' breeks unbraced,
And buits unlaced,
The laird's gane oot to get,
And bring in by,
The impatient kye
That's rowtin' at the yett.

Rover, the tyke,
Is thro' the dyke,
And scoorin' owre the fiel's,
To gather in
Ilk stragglin' ane,
By yowffin' at her heels.

The laird cries oot,
"Eh, eh, ye brute!
Ye clatty wasp hae dune."
Then lifts a stane,
And cries again,
"Rover, come in ahin!"

As up the brae
They slowly gae,
Thro' dirty dubs and mire,
The lassocks staun,
Wi' switch in haun,
To drive them in the byre.

It's "Fleckie Broon,
Ye witch, staun roun';
Ye limmer, Jean, luk' spry";
Or "Bell, ye brat,
Come oot o' that,
The sorra's in the kye.

"That besom Bell's
Sae dour and fell,
She'll nayther bin' or haud,
Till owre her rump
She gets a thump.
Buiss up, ye muckle jaud!"

The bin'in thro',
The lassocks, noo,
Are busy a' as bees;
Wi' purrin' din
The milk streams in
The luggies 'tween their knees.

Nane tries to shirk
Her share o' work;
Nae needit rest is ta'en,
Till a' the kye
Are stribbit dry,
And lowsed and oot again.

By this the sun
Has het the grun',
And lickit up the dew;
Anither day,
Like monie mae,
Is slowly wearin' thro'.

PART III.

HUMOROUS PROSE.

A PEEP AT M'PHUN IN HIS STUDY.

The ebon mantle of night had obscured the glorious face of day. The book canvasser and tax collector had long since gone to rest. Tired labour on its pallet of straw had yielded itself up to the arms of Morpheus, and was making the night musical with its balmy snores. The medical man, armed with potion and pill, was skulking along under cover of the darkness, bent upon his mission of death. Far out in the backyard the wild, impassionate song of the amorous cat was resounding through the murky atmosphere, cheering the lonely vigils of the malt-laden policeman, and nerving him on to deeds of daring.

At this witching hour of night (as the immortal William Shakespeare has it), when churchyards and jaded politicians yawn, and ghosts and scavengers troop forth, the hapless, poverty-stricken bard, M'Phun, sat in the lonely turret chamber of a large tenement in Yardside Street, patiently bending over his desk with his whole soul trembling at the point of a Pickwick pen. "What is life?" he mutters, gazing abstractedly into space, and passing his long, vulture-like talons through the silver-grey hairs that

adorn his lofty dome of thought. When, lo, as if in answer to his query, the spirit of poetry crieth aloud within him:—

> "Life is but the rapturous kiss—
> Yum! Yum! 'tis gone in nothingness."

WHAT IS MAN?

"O man, what is man?" I soliloquised. "A puny weakling that fretteth his short hour upon the stage, then quietly disappears behind the scenes. He is as an air-blown bubble, which, tossed hither and thither by the force of circumstances, bursts, and is gone for ever. Man, what is man?" I reiterated, raising my voice to a higher pitch, and looking straight at my landlady, who was busy creating sweet milk scones and oatmeal tablet for her lodger's evening repast.

"I don't know, unless he be the stock sample of some idiot asylum, or an elaborate show card for some whisky distilling company," she replied, with a look of severe meaning.

"Pshaw, woman," I said, turning away in haughty disdain; I ought to know better than declaim in your presence; the subject is too comprehensive for your grasp; the poor handful of brains you are possessed of will scarcely enable you to give an intelligent rendering of an eating-house price-list or a conversation lozenge."

"There, there now, that will do, M'Phun, I did not mean to offend you," she said in an altered tone of voice, "you know quite well that if there is anything in this world that I do like to hear it is a recitation by you; so do give it me; that's a nice M'Phun; there's a sweet philosopher."

"Well," I continued, in more amiable tones, "man is a watch direct from the hands of the maker, carefully wound up and set agoing for a certain number of years. The key is withheld from him, probably for the purpose of winding him up again and setting him agoing in some other sphere when he has run out in this. His brain is the works, which he must lubricate and polish occasionally with reading, conversation, and study, else they will get dull and rusty and become unable to perform their functions properly. His heart is the main spring, and its pulsations are the medium through which the watchmaker's apprentice, or doctor, arrives at the general harmony, or discord, as it may be, of the whole machine. If the works should happen to get clogged by any little indiscretions or excesses, such as drinking, over-eating, &c., &c., there is a tendency in the timepiece to go slow, or to stop altogether. To prevent this there is a regulator, or conscience, which an unseen hand is for ever shifting and re-shifting, to make it keep correct time. Then there is the jewel, or soul, that priceless part, without which all the rest of the works are practically valueless. Look," said I, getting up from my seat and strutting around the apartment in all the pride and vigour of

my manhood. "Just cast your eye over this chronometer and tell me, if you can, what will become of these massive cases when the jewel has been taken from its setting."

"I suppose they will be melted down," she coolly observed.

I have never bandied words with her since; we are not even on swearing terms.

AT A FASHIONABLE CONCERT.

We attended a fashionable concert the other evening, and our brilliant presence contributed not a little to the *eclat* of the occasion. The *creme de la creme* of society was there—in fact, the whole *elite* of the neighbourhood, Mr, Mrs, and the young Misses Elite, all gaily haberdashed, toiletted, starched, and perfumed in their usual nose-ravishing manner.

As your gallant correspondent swept up the promenade with his landlady hanging on his arm—her face suffused with a fourteen by ten inches blush, and the rich, dreamy drapery of our big easy-chair tidy hanging in graceful folds around her exquisitely cut and finely-chisselled shoulders—there was a general resurrection of opera glasses, eye-glasses, &c., &c.; while an old gentleman in evening dress sarcastically observed: "Aw, I am quite the gentleman to-night." "So you are, and a polished one, too,"

I returned, jocularly tapping him on the glittering bald head with my sweet-smelling catalogue; which remark had the desired effect of putting a stopper upon him.

We had scarcely got seated when a dapper little foreigner, in black clothes and patent leather shoes, came tripping gaily out on to the platform. After making his salaam to the audience he sat down and began to tickle the ribs of a grand piano, causing it to laugh boisterously. He was immediately followed by a tall, slender, sinister-looking individual, who smilingly advanced towards the footlights and deponed—

> "I am a friar of orders grey,
> And down in the valley I take my way,"

his strong, deep-set voice growling and grumbling throughout the hall like the mutterings of distant thunder, giving the uninitiated the impression that he was struggling in the mortal throes of stomach-ache. Then suddenly changing his tactics, he started out on a vocal run, clearing the first two or three bars with a bellow and bound, and snorting and thundering up the crescendo passages as if the great Spirit of Melody and all her satellites were in full pursuit.

Here he paused for a moment to take in oxygen sufficient to last him in the downward journey, then switching back again into the vocal track, came tearing and trumpeting down the gamut like a stampede of a thousand elephants, scattering riotous harmony and legalised breaches of the public peace in every

direction, and winding up with a roar that caused that invaluable public official, our town crier, to go off in a faint. The audience were wild with excitement; they waved their hats, cheered and encored, till it seemed as if they had taken leave of their senses.

"Is he not immense?" rapturously exclaimed a fragrant youth of about seventeen summers to me as I sat coolly surveying the whole proceedings. "Well," I returned, "I am not a musical analyst, but it occurs to me that his northern notes are a little too emaciated." "You are exceedingly cultured," he said; "where did you acquire all your musical phrases, may I ask?" "Through playing the big drum in a brass band," I returned good naturedly. "Then you will have heard the great Wagner's 'Sonata in B Flat'?" he continued with a knowing wink. "No, but I have heard the great *waggoner's son at a* carter's parade sing out 'Gee Major,'" I facetiously replied. "You are very smart," he said; "probably you are under the impression that you are capable of taking me down." "Well," I returned, "I might easily accomplish the taking of you down, as I once did the same service for a Waterbury watch, but when it came to the putting of you up again I am afraid that I would never be in it."

At this remark he got angry and said he would perhaps meet me at some future period under more favourable auspices. "Yes, and I will be bottle holder," chimed in a purple-nosed publican of the Falstaffian style of architecture, who occupied a seat

immediately in our rear. "You have held a good many bottles in your time, if I am not mistaken,' I returned, giving him a look of meaning that made him squirm in his seat like a speared eel.

The silence that ensued here was broken only by the signal for the approach of the great prima donna, Madame Organini Concertina. As she came gliding slowly on to the platform and backed up right in front of us, it was quite evident, from the first-class carriage which she displayed, that she would at least carry the aristocratic portion of the public along with her. But, I must confess, I did not feel over prepossessed by her appearance—her dress being too much stacatto, to use a musical expression, at the one end and too much andante at the other; or, to put it more plainly, in crawling into her clothes she had just overdone it a bit, and crawled too far. She sang something or other in a foreign tongue which nobody could understand; but which, according to rule, everyone industriously applauded. Having a lingering desire myself to keep pace with the times, I chimed in along with the others and shouted accordingly.

The next on the vocal index was Miss Milly Melrose, as trig a little mud-built tenement as ever occupied a site overlooking a sea of faces. She came stepping on to the scaffolding with the air of some young boarding-school miss, who is up to receive her first instructions in the art of making oneself agreeable. When she bowed her acknowledgements, I was immediately on my good behaviour, but when

she shot a glance in our direction and smiled, I made an excited attempt to adjust my collar and necktie. Then again, when she opened her pretty little mouth and intimated in the sweetest of tones that

> "Two summers ago, a brave ship sailed
> Far away to the golden west,"

I inwardly moved a vote of confidence in her, but in the second, or succeeding verse, when she related as how

> "Willie would bring her the first wild rose
> In her new sun bonnet to wear."

I suddenly rose to my feet and declared, in a loud tone of voice, that Willie would be a darned sight smarter than I took him to be if he put in an appearance with his wild flower before Peter M'Phun. Cries of "Shame, shame! Put him out! Turn him out!" were beginning to make themselves heard throughout the whole place, when my landlady rose to the occasion, and grabbing me firmly by the coat-tails, jerked me somewhat forcibly back into my seat, exclaiming at the same time, "In the name of wonder, M'Phun, what d'ye mean!" "Excuse me, madam," I returned with a confused air, "it was only the emanations of a surcharged spirit." "It may be the emanations o' some kin' o' speerit," she returned, "but I am a wee dootfu' that ye haena' gi'en it its richt name." This with a look that goaded me into silence—a silence which continued intact till the end —when I solemnly took a vow that I would never *attend* a fashionable concert again.

A DREAM.

I was sitting by the fireside the other night engaged in a sumptuous think, when the door was gently pushed half open, and there came sidling into the apartment the figure of a man clad in a scarcity of garments. He was tall, slender, and spare of form; in fact, so spare that there was not much of a form left to spare; just an immortal soul with a barricade of bones around it. His nose was making feeble attempts to get up a shadow on his face, and his dark, leaden eyes were peering warily over the battlements of his prominent cheek bones, as if he was afraid some hungry cur would make a very natural mistake and run away with him.

"Angels and members of the Established Church, spiritual police force, defend us!" I cried, starting to my feet and staring at him with hair erect and mouth ajar. "Who art thou?" The answer came in hollow, sepulchural tones: "I am all that is left of Pate M'Phun, the humorist." "You look more like a walking advertisement of some fashionable cemetery," I returned. "But why that haggard form, that hollow, sunken eye, that gaunt nose, and general starved-looking appearance?" "Alas!" he said, "all this is the result of trying to live by my literary labours."

"Then, why not take to some respectable occupation, such as sweeping the streets, selling matches, loafing, estimating for the upholstery work on beggars' crutches, or acting as gamekeeper on the town's refuse-heap, instead of wearing out both body

and soul in vain endeavours to wring a living out of literature?" "Alas, it is too late; this will explain all," he said, placing in my hand a letter with a black border which ran as follows:—"Notice. There will be disposed of by public funeral at Greenfield Cemetery, on the 10th inst., the last mortal remnants of Peter M'Phun, beloved lodger of Widow Murray. To commence at three o'clock prompt."

"Then thou art dead!" I shrieked, convulsively grasping the back of a chair that stood near. "Spirits are not given to fabricate," he said. Then, stalking towards the bed, he took down my watch from the nail on which it hung, and waving it round his head he said in the most weird and sepulchral tones imaginable, "M'Phun! M'Phun! Time is with thee no more." "Great Gomorrah!" I yelled, making a dive at the spectre.

I woke up to find to my surprise that I was dragging my landlady through the room, shouting at the pitch of my voice, "Let go that watch, you darned apparition, or I will break every bone in your body." "What do you mean?" screamed that inestimable woman, wriggling herself out of my grasp. "Which?—What?—Where?"—I said in a dazed sort of state. "Have I been dreaming?" "You have either had nightmare or another attack of poetry," she said, sarcastically, as she began to carefully adjust her drapery before the looking-glass.

WAR NEWS.

Washington, Thursday.—From a reliable rumour, just come to hand, it is stated here that friendly hostilities between this country and Spain have just been broken off, and that there is every reason to believe war has been declared to have been declared.

Madrid, Friday.—It is stated here on good authority that a warrant has been issued for the apprehension of the American fleet, which is charged with riotous and disorderly conduct, thereby creating a breach of the public peace on the high seas.

Washington, Saturday.—From information just to hand, it is said that a large contingent of Yale and Harvard University students, including several sons of well-known millionaires, have volunteered, at their own expense, to stay at home and pray for the success of the American arms.

Madrid, Sunday.—A report, which seems to gain credence here, both in military and naval circles, is to the effect that Senor Sagasta is endeavouring to negotiate a loan with the States for several millions of dollars, to enable him to prosecute the war with greater vigour.

Washington, Monday.—It is rumoured here, on good authority, that there is a marked coolness existing between America and Spain, on account of the declaration of war.

Madrid, Tuesday.—While the American battleship, Bluster, was cruising off the coast of Matanzas this morning she had her conning tower materially damaged, her first and second class mortgages blown

away, and the Atlantic ocean shot from beneath her keel by the Spanish batteries.

Key West, Wednesday.—The American transport ship, Loafer, laden with a large supply of wind and promises, to feed the starving Cubans, put in here this morning, to allow of the ship's cook coming ashore to negotiate with the authorities for the loan of a gridiron.

Madrid, Thursday.—In the Spanish Cortes yesterday, Senor Sagasto, in a speech burning with patriotic fervour, entered a vigorous protest against the undignified practice of the American authorities in erecting barbed wire fences and scattering tacks around their entrenchments and fortifications. It is a breach of international law, he said, and ought not to be indulged in by any nation which has the least pretension to call itself a civilized people.

Cuba, Friday.—To-day a shell from the American battleship St. Louis knocked the bottom out of the political situation, and smashed the seat of war into matchwood, thereby seriously endangering the lives and occupations of several well-known newspaper reporters.

Key West, Saturday.—Despatches to hand report a great naval battle fought off the coast of Puerto Rico yesterday, in which both sides claim the victory, and it is rumoured in well-informed circles that there is likely to be a row over the dispute.

AT THE BANQUET.

"Where away to-night?" observed my landlady to me the other evening, as I was busy basting my temple of thought with some sweet-smelling lard. "To the political banquet in the Agricultural Hall," I returned, extending my chest and looking down upon her with a dignified air. "O, I suppose it would not be a show without Punch," she said, turning away with a contemptuous snort. "True," I said, "but too much *punch* is apt to leave one's head in the morning as dull and void of feeling as a frost-bitten turnip, or as full of harassing sounds and discords as a dilapidated and ruined concertina." "Then see that you don't make an ass of yourself before you return," she said.

"Madam," said I, striking a dramatic attitude, and placing my right hand over the region of my watch pocket, "your advice will be cherished. I will treasure it up in the innermost recesses of my soul. It is the beacon light that will guide my little craft of propriety thro' trackless seas of claret and champagne. It is the staff that will support me in my pilgrimage over mountains of ham sandwiches and plum duff. Nay, it will be ever present with me when the syren tones of insidious waiters are ringing in my ears, civilly inviting me to irrigate and moisten my parched-up clay with a little of that seductive fluid known as 'Walker's Best.' It will be the helm of my conduct. It will. It will——" "Let it guide ye clear of the valley of the shadow of *delirium tremens*, ye gibbering, bald-headed numskull ye," she

said, suddenly losing her temper, and—well, I will not say what happened.

I may tell you I was a little put out at her unceremonious conduct; in fact, a great deal put out, more *put out* than I care to tell. So, picking up my new tile hat from the gutter (a tile that cost me ten-and-six at the Armstrong tile works), I hailed a passing cab, and after giving strict injunctions to the driver not to take me to the New Cemetery (I had on my black clothes) I arrived just in time to be denied admittance.

"Admission by ticket only," sung out the doorkeeper, a rather consequential-looking gentleman, with a bald-headed face, and side whiskers on his head. "I thought it was by the door," I returned in a jocular mood. "Did you," he said, "you are very smart, but I tell you flat you can't get in here." "What; isn't the hole big enough?" I said. "Get away out of this," he said, mad as boiled thunder at my persistency. "I tell you, you won't get in, not if you were the Speaker of the House himself."

"Well, I can't say I am that dignitary you mention, but I have a landlady who lays claim to that title," I coolly observed, at the same time endeavouring to thrust myself past him. "Now," he said, "if you persist I will break every bone in your body." "You can't do it," I said. "My landlady has just been attempting that and is already two or three ribs in advance of you, so you see that the thing is quite impossible, and *infra dig.*," I added, to let him see that I was not altogether void of a classical

education. "I'm *in for a dig* at your nose," he said, suddenly squaring up, *a la* John L. Sullivan.

How this altercation might have ended I am unable to say had not Sir William Houldsworth come up, and linking his arm in mine, said, "Come away, Mr M'Phun, never mind him; he is only acting according to his light." It was amusing to see how that belligerent doorkeeper climbed down at this display of friendship towards me from one of the notables of the county. He made a thousand apologies, begged my pardon, hoped that I would look over it, &c., &c. I pitied him and went in and on to the platform with my friend Sir William.

I may tell you I never saw such a grand display of gummed heads, bow-windowed waistcoats, and cut-away mortcloths during the whole course of my life. The tables were decorated with herbs and plants and fruitful trees "from Greenland's icy mountains and India's coral strands," so to speak, and the walls were festooned and garnished with evergreens, and bore such appropriate texts and mottoes as "The Union for ever," "Smoking is strictly prohibited," "Salisbury and Devonshire," "Wet paint," etc., etc.

"What's new in the political world?" observed Sir William, after we had just got comfortably seated and were complacently surveying the animated scene before us. "Ah," I said, "the political sky at present is overcast with the dark, lowering clouds of disagreement between capital and labour. Where it is all to end I am sure I don't know, unless it be in

another Revolution." "Come," he said, "don't take such a pessimistic view of matters as that, Mr M'Phun. Don't you think that by setting up Conciliation Boards all over the country, and by referring our disputes to the impartial and unbiassed judgments of our fellow-countrymen, the clouds will soon clear away and we will see the promised land?" "It is no good, sir," I returned. "The masters are to blame; it is they who are at fault."

"Why, if the employers of labour would only treat their workmen as workmen, and not as if they were a parcel of gentlemen whose every wish is to be gratified, it would soon bring about a better state of matters. They have been fondled, coddled, and fed until they believe that we run our mills and green pea factories just to give them a little pleasant healthy exercise. Why, sir, would you believe it, I actually pay my hands the fabulous sum of two shillings and sixpence per week, and yet they had the audacity to demand another penny. It is preposterous, sir, and I won't stand it." "Hush," said Sir William, "don't get excited. Here, take an apple, it will cool your blood."

I took the proffered bulb from his hand, and this set us talking about the fruit-growing industry. "Melons are melons this year," he remarked in a subdued tone of voice. "Of course they are," I said; "did you expect they would be turnips?" "You misunderstand me," he said, trying to suppress a smile; "it was the price I was alluding to." "Have you had any melons this season?" he con-

tinued, leaning over and helping himself to a few grapes. "I should think so," I returned, not at all relishing the question. "Very indigestible things?" he said, looking me straight in the face. "Very," I echoed; "at least they did not agree very well with me." "What kind of melons were they, green or yellow?" "Oh, they turned black and blue." "I don't understand you," he said. "When I tell you that I had three ribs fractured with one *mellin'*, probably," I said, "you will understand." At this he laughed uproariously, and playfully slapping me on the back, exclaimed, "I see, I see; you have been having another row with your landlady."

His risible faculties having subsided, he renewed the conversation by remarking, "Great crop of apples," this year, I believe. Selling very cheap at present." "Cheap!" I said; "why cheap is not the name for it. I understand that in some parts of the country they are so plentiful that they are actually feeding the policemen with them. The price of food stuffs nowadays," I added, "is nothing to compare with house rents. Why, the house that I occupy is rented out of all proportions. There is more rent than house about it. You could hide the factor in some of them and still have room for a respectable burglar or two." "Then why not build yourself," he said. I said, "I intend to build a garret if I can find an eligible site." Here our conversation was suddenly terminated by my being called upon to propose the toast of "The Government." So launching at once into my subject, I said:

"Mr Chairman and gentlemen—The toast that I have to propose this evening is one that I do not intend to butter on both sides, to please the palates of all parties. Seeing there are men here of every shade of opinion—from the most advanced anarchist down to the petrified and fossilised old plutocrat—I beg they will bear with me if the food that I am about to purvey for them is not so easy of digestion as they would wish.

"It has been maintained by the Opposition that the spirit of Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill is still alive, and that its immortal part will at some future date be re-incarnated within the anatomy of some capable statesman who will carry it and give freedom to Ireland. But I tell you, gentlemen, that it is dead, fatally dead; its death is now chronic—it died of enlargement of the heart; and the Union being next of kin, we mean to maintain that Union with our breasts bared and our purses open to the foe; we will fight for it to the very last drop of blood and whisky that is in our veins; we will dare danger and death, nay, even run the risk of being turned out of office itself, in defence of that good old flag that is at present proudly and defiantly waving aloft in the breeze." (Great excitement, waving of handkerchiefs and umbrellas, in the midst of which the Burgh Band struck in with that highly appropriate and patriotic air, entitled, "There's bound to be a row.") Continuing, I said:

"We have been taunted by our enemies with having no policy to put before the country. This, gentle-

men, is a fabrication, a vile conspiracy, got up to ruin and damage us in the eyes of the electors. If to stand up in defence of the Church, when a ruthless horde of brazen-faced and loud-mouthed demagogues threaten to raze her to the ground, is to have no policy, then certainly we have none. If to rally round the House of Lords—that noble institution that has done such good service in the past—when it is threatened on all sides with instant demolition, be no policy, then I must admit that we have no policy." "It's not true, M'Phun, you have a policy on your landlady's life," shouted a scurrilous and ill-mannered person at the rear end of the hall—a person who, I am given to understand, a little later on, at the risk of his own life, captured a wild and untameable policeman.

Order having once more been restored I resumed my discourse. "We have several other little items on our programme that we mean to push forward and carry with as little delay as possible, such as Old Age Pensions for worn out M.P.'s, Rearrangement of the Paupers' Income Tax, Compensation to Stockbrokers who have lost their all by the fluctuations of the Stock Exchange, The Better Housing of Millionaires, and quite a host of other little Bills too numerous to enumerate. So I ask you, gentlemen, to drink with me, one and all, a very hearty bumper to 'The Government and the Unionist Cause.'"

I sat down amidst the greatest tempest of excitement, clinking of glasses, and singing of "They are jolly good fellows" that it has ever been my lot to

witness. I was thanked on all sides for my rousing and spirit-stirring address, and Sir William Arrol offered to take me home in his landau. But I excused myself on the plea that I was afraid we might *land a'* in the gutter.

So I went home on my feet, and it was while standing beneath the turret chamber of our castellated mansion in Princes Street that I sung out in a Bacchanalian tone of voice—"The Union (hic) for ev r"; "Union ish strength"; "United we (hic) stand, divided we fall"—when, as if to exemplify the truth of that statement, the policeman who was holding me up relaxed his grasp, and I fell, as limp as a dish-cloth, at his feet, from where, a little later on, I was handed over to the care of my landlady by the neighbours.

ON MUSIC-HALL VOCALISTS.

Music-hall vocalists, though seldom in affluent circumstances, generally contrive to make a fair living by their profession. They make their money in winter, and retire during the summer months to the seaside so that they may get the necessaries of life at *coast* prices. They are hired at an average rate of £2 10s per night, *in voice* price, but not with option of purchase, as some "Singer's" are.

They subsist chiefly on bitter beer and applause, and will lounge around public bars and sip their

favourite beverage till they are unable to stand; but though they are unable to stand themselves, they never resent other people *standing* for them—newspaper reporters excepted.

To become a professional music-hall vocalist you must go through a course of howling in some public house, then dress yourself in a suit of black doeskin, put on white kid gloves, and, if possible, long black hair, slaked profusely with odoriferous butterine, and announce to the public, in large flaming posters, that you are the greatest artiste breathing, &c., &c., and you are complete.

If you are a bass, so much the better; there is always a demand in the profession for Bass's. The female vocalists are all beautiful and chaste; but I'm inclined to think they would be less *chased* if they always acted on the square with their landladies.

Poor, silly young men often get smitten by their charms, never dreaming for one moment that these charms are transferable. Could they have but a peep behind the scenes and see the fair creatures don those embellishments they would naturally say with the Red man, "Big, brave, going on the warpath." I was once captivated myself by one of those artificial beauties. It was her falsetto voice that did it. But I discovered that she had a *false set o'* teeth as well, so I retired, preferring rather to bear those ills I had than fly to others I knew not of.

TURNED ARTIST.

Of late years interest in the fine arts has become much more common. Many, who never before thought of taking up the brush, are now stretching their canvases and imaginations with a view to future pecuniary advantage. Your genial correspondent, among the rest, has turned labourer in oils and has set up a studio in one of the turret chambers of Yardside Villa, where, to use a couplet of the poet Gray's,

> "The simple artist, unbred to sentimental gush,
> Pours his wild effusions, spontaneous from the brush."

My principal work of this season is a large thirty by twenty-four picture, entitled "A Study in Hard Water." It is a very natural representation of icebergs in the Polar seas. Some of the criticisms it has met with at the hands of ink slingers (to use an Americanism) are not altogether just, as you will observe from the following, which I have copied from the columns of the *Scotsman* in connection with the great Edinburgh show:—

"No. 999 is a fair sample of that broad, suggestive, dashy style of painting which characterises the works of this artist. From its complete absence of detail and denuded state of construction we are inclined to believe that it belongs less to the pre-Raphaelite order than to that of the more modern 'Society of Workers in Whitewash.' We confess that we have hitherto had a decided partiality for this particular class of work, and have rather tried to encourage

than otherwise young artists struggling in this direction. But at the same time the line ought to be drawn somewhere, and in the interests of Art we are of opinion that it ought to have been drawn tightly round the neck of the author of this libellous production before he had a chance of sinning in paint."

Notwithstanding this adverse vote, and the fact that this achievement in oils was down in the catalogue at fifty pounds, I have entered into negotiations with a gentleman of means with a view to its purchase. He says it has left an impression on him that time will never efface. My landlady says it left an impression on her that took turpentine to remove, that remarkable woman having, unguardedly, sat down upon it before it was dry.

By the by she appears to be quite lukewarm on the subject of my artistic tendencies; at least I inferred as much from her behaviour the other morning at the breakfast table, when I got up, and, in a highly excited state of mind, informed her that I had come to the conclusion that I must either paint or burst. "Then by all manner of means, M'Phun, burst," said she, "if you wish to save yourself an enormous deal of trouble and vexation of spirit." "Away, woman," I retorted. "You have no love for the beautiful; your poor, narrow, self-centred soul has never burst the bonds of sense and taken its flight into the realms of imagery, that sweet Elysian field wherein poets and painters revel in the sunshine of happy thoughts and lofty ideas."

"Revel in your granny's mutch and ringlets," she

returned, with a deprecating wave of the hand. "I wish tae guidness ye wad get a pun or twa o' green paint and revel in that barrow that's lying at the back door; it wad fit ye faur better than rinnin' nicht after nicht wi' the painter bodies and getting your heid crammed fu' o' sic infernal nonsense. Revel indeed!"

But in spite of her determined opposition, I am still assiduously prosecuting my studies, and have at present on the easel a picture that I flatter myself is equal to, if it does not surpass, anything that I have hitherto accomplished. Imagine to yourself a long, low-lying stretch of madder-brown moorland, with Prussian blue hills in the distance. The setting sun is just disappearing behind the western horizon, and its last rays are falling in mellow floods of Naples yellow on a deep moss hag or morass in the foreground, which couldn't be *more ass* like, as my landlady is pleased to put it. Immediate foreground —rustic figure of an agricultural labourer mounted upon the ruins of a snuff-coloured horse, which I flatter myself I have managed very successfully.

I was just in the act of giving the finishing touches to it, when lo! a visitor was announced. I suspected him to be one of those critic fellows, from the low-toned clothes that he wore and the dreamy kind of expression of his face. After the usual formalities he said, "You must be aware, Mr M'Phun, that artists are born, not made; no matter what people may say to the contrary." "Certainly," I returned, "it is the only practical method yet discovered of bringing them into this vale of tears. So

you see they have no alternative." "Pshaw!" he retorted; "I am afraid you are too dull to apprehend me." I haven't got the warrant for your apprehension," I returned facetiously; "but," I added, "had I the possession of that document, I can solemnly assure you that no earthly influence would stand between me and the execution of my duty."

At this he got mad; said I was a man of depraved tastes, a low illiterate scoundrel, and that I had not got sufficient brains to grasp any subject. "I have just got about sufficient brains to grasp one of His Majesty's subjects," I returned, seizing him by the scruff of the neck and the base of the back and trotting him out into the street.

AT THE FAIR.

"Are you going to take your gold-headed malacca cane with you?" observed my landlady the other day as I was busy preparing to start out on an expedition to that scene of revelry and dissipation that is at present taking place in our midst. "If I don't, probably I *may lack a cane* ere I return," I snorted, slamming to the door.

I had just arrived on the scene when the red-nosed proprietor of a shooting saloon cried, "Here you are; every time you ring the bell you get a cigar!" "Judging from the colour of your nose," I retorted, "every time you have rung the bell there

has been something else than a cigar going." At this he got mad and suddenly let drive with his right fist in my direction, hitting the air with such terrific force that he knocked a hole in it and fell through the aperture which he had made, into the gutter, where he lay with his mouth chokeful of dirt and swear.

His partner immediately stepped into the breach, and got in a real sledge-hammer blow right on the nose of my shadow that was cast on the boarding of his saloon, causing him to howl like a Mohawk Indian. Nothing daunted, however, he again smilingly toed the mark and hit me a stinging blow on the fist with his nose, causing him to reel and stagger for a bit; but he managed to recover himself a little and made a rapid but well-organised retreat.

I now bent my steps towards the entrance to the menagerie. Here I was seized with a sudden whim. Banging my hat firmly over my eyes, I rushed through the crowd, crying at the pitch of my voice, "A lion broken out, a lion broken out!" There was a general stampede—men, women, and children shouting, cursing, crying, and tearing at each other in their endeavours to get out at the gate. One stalwart gentleman, evidently cooler than the rest, seizing me by the scruff of the neck, demanded where it had broken out. I said, "It has broken out all over the back with the mange." Dear reader, a simple half-brick marks the spot where the illustrious M'Phun fell.

Shortly after this my attention was directed to an old man, who was grinding out disturbances from a small kist of whistles with one hand, rioting on a big drum with the other, and shouting, "Hi, hi, hi! Here you are, the only show in the Fair!" Accepting this statement as a veritable truth, I tendered my penny in payment, and was soon standing listening to the guide and philosopher of the company dilating on the merits of his various pictures.

"This, ladies and gentlemen," he was saying, "is an artistic representation of Napoleonsh—hic—Buonaparte, the hero of Bull's Run, who fought and—hic—conquered Sir John C. Heenan in a ring of ten feet square for a purse of two hundred sovs. and five hundred pounds a side, under the—hic—Duke of Wellington's rules; but was—hic—afterwards defeated in a drawn battle of two hours' duration by Julius Cæsar on the field of Peterloo; after which he was banished to the Island of Arran, where he fell a prey to remorse and—hic—gout."

"I doubt, my friend, you have got considerably mixed up," laughingly interposed a gentleman who was standing near. "O, you go away," he said; "I know what I am—hic—talking about. You will find it all in Burns's first epistle to the Lapraiks. This, ladies and gentlemen, is a representation of Jonah in the den of lions. He was cast among the royal beasts as a—hic—punishment for refusing to believe that the earth was flat. He afterwards had the misfortune to extract a thorn from the foot of a bottle-nosed—hic—whale, for which he was turned

into a pillar of salt by day and a pillar of fire by night. Pass on to the—hic—next caravan," he said, with the same unblushing effrontery as had hitherto characterised him.

"This, ladies and gentlemen, is a life-sized representation of the Right Honourable William Calcraft, the notorious politician, who poisoned the minds of a whole human family in the year '86 with his Home Rule Bill; for which he was created an octogenarian, and invested with the order of—hic—Prince Salisbury to clear out as soon as possible, or suffer the—hic—last penalty of the law by being cast in bronze." How long this idiot might have gone on gibbering in this strain I am at a loss to know, had not the combined force of the company arrived on the scene and forcibly ejected him.

As I wandered about the show-ground I got wedged in a dense crowd, and when in that position I felt a hand slip quietly into my pocket. I stood still and didn't get excited, or call for the police, for I knew the hand was my own.

Tired, and deafened by the perpetual din of steam whistles, clashing of cymbals, beating of gongs, &c., I retraced my steps homewards. While relating to my landlady the sights and incidents of the Fair, I remarked that I had seen a cat with five legs. Evidently remembering my libellous remark of the morning, she said, with a malicious look in her eye, "A cat with nine tails would suit some people better."

A PATHETIC TALE.

"Tell us a nice pathetic story, Pate," observed my landlady the other night as I sat in the cosy arm-chair gazing abstractedly into the fire. Somewhat roused from my reverie, I began dreamily: "She was my earliest fancy, all my fond boyish hopes and youthful aspirations were centred in that delicate, pale face and exquisitely moulded form from the first time I set eyes on her. For hours I would linger about the warehouse in which she performed her daily work, with the sole object of catching a glimpse of that dear, dear face.

"O, how I longed to call her mine, but alas! there was to our union a barrier. I was poor, but surely that was not an insurmountable one. I could toil hard; I would wear my very fingers to the bone so that she should become mine. With this end in view I set to work in earnest, swerving not, night or day, from the path of duty, and overcome every obstacle that threatened to impede my progress until I had amassed the sum requisite, which I hurried to lay at the feet of her guardian and bear her in triumph to my cottage home.

"O with what pleasure I used to take her out and show her to all my friends and acquaintances! She had my constant care and attention. I was happy in the thought that I could wear her next my bosom for the rest of my life. But alas! a villain robbed me of my treasure; wrenched from my heart the jewel that I had been at so much pains to possess.

The blow was a crushing one, but I bore up manfully against it.

"I set the detective force to work, waited patiently the result of their investigations, but all to no purpose." "She must have been very dear to you," chimed in that interesting woman who had patiently listened to my tale. "Dear to me," I returned, "I think she was; she was jewelled in nine holes." "Jewelled in wh—what?" she said, gaping in astonishment. "Great thunder," I returned, "are you not aware that I have been talking about a silver watch I once possessed?" My nose has been muzzled with skin plaster ever since.

MUNICIPAL WARFARE.

Mr Editor,—Dear Sir,—It it with feelings of a very mixed order that I peruse your monthly reports of our municipal meetings. The body corporate seems to be in a very uncertain state of health at present. There is evidently much need of blood-letting, to judge from the last diagnosis of the case, by those *a'gust* personages who attend to its ailments. The severe courtesies and exaggerated compliments that were bandied about from one to another last week show conclusively that the milk of human kindness has long ago become sour, and it is my opinion that the sooner it is turned into butter the better for all parties concerned. Again and again

some one of the members intimates to another that he is a pure and undiluted liar of the very first water without any foreign element of honesty in his composition, and is immediately paid back with—"You are an A. S. S., you are well up in the ethics of Ignorance, and have long ago graduated in Plain Dull Stupidity." It is men such as these, who have the courage of their convictions, we want to manage the town's affairs, men of devotion and bravery who will don the uniform of respectability and go forth to fight the battle of the ratepayers, unmindful of their weeping wives and children at home—men of iron-clad cheek and barbed wire nerves, who will stand unmoved amidst the din and clash of wordy warfare, when such terms as "liar" and "scoundrel" are flying around them as thick as hail—men who will bravely stand on the ramparts of their reputation and dare the haughty and insolent foe to an exchange of unparliamentary language—in fact, men who don't give a Dunton Dam for anybody where their honour and their reputation are concerned.

Men, with a laudable ambition to have a Corporation horse or free coup named after them, that we want to represent us—men with a good business and scientific training who can tell you at a glance to which end of a horse the cart should be attached, or that a drain, to be of any use, must be open at both ends, and not at the one end only, as hitherto has been the belief of some of our amateur sanitary engineers—public-spirited men who will attend to the acoustics of our cattle markets, and see to the

better ventilation of our public parks and bleaching greens, and in case of fire will see that the hose is attached to the water pipe, and not to the gas one, as has too frequently been the case in times past; in short, Mr Editor, all round men who have got the corners knocked off them by the friction of municipal life—men of principle and honour, who would scorn to take advantage of their wives and children, by giving their services gratuitously to the Corporation, and thereby rendering them chargeable to the rates. Hoping that such scenes as were witnessed last week may be of more frequent occurrence, and give the ratepayers some compensation for their money, for it is from such scenes as these that Auld Killie's grandeur springs,—I remain yours and your readers, &c.

AT MY TOILET.

Gentle reader, have you ever been frustrated in an endeavour to button a refractory collar? If so, then you would have sympathised with me had you seen me the other morning as I stood, in my dressing-room, in the bloom and full vigour of my manhood, before the looking glass, with a face the colour of a boiled beet, and my mouth twitched half way round in the direction of my right ear, with a whole volume of unspoken profanity surging and struggling wildly in my breast for utterance.

For fully fifteen minutes, by the clock, I had wrestled, Spartan like, with that article of wearing apparel. The betting appeared to be just about even, the starch being in about equal measure, taken out of us. The perspiration was standing in big drops on my forehead, like the amber beads that adorn the juicy sides of a sturdy Scotch haggis; my hands were hanging nerveless and limp by my sides, while that obnoxious sample of dry goods, all finger-stained and looking almost as defiant as ever, was waving around, and refusing to be coerced.

Recovering my somewhat spent force, I meekly closed my eyes, inwardly breathed a silent prayer, and went in again with a persistency that, had it been directed into the proper channels of business, would have made my fortune. "Perhaps the button hole is too small," mildly suggested my landlady. "Take it off, M'Phun, and I will widen it for you and darn it up nicely again." "I am just in the humour to darn it myself," I roared, and the next instant it was raining buttons, cotton thread, linen rags, and language, while your usually mild-tempered correspondent was pawing and tearing around in all the frenzy of thwarted hopes, and vowing vengeance on all linen drapers, seamstresses and haberdashers in Christendom, in the midst of which my landlady and the cat fled the scene, leaving me to chew the bitter cud of reflection alone.

JUBILEE OF PATE M'PHUN AND HIS LANDLADY.

Mr Peter M'Phun and Lady M'Murray of Yardside Villa celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their unmarried lives on Tuesday evening last, in the large and spacious saloon of the Royal Green Pea and Fizzing Drink Emporium, Titchfield Street. The door mat of the establishment was completely overhauled, the window fastenings rearranged, and the gas extensively turned on for the occasion. They were made the recipients of many valuable and costly gifts commemorative of the event, all being appropriate to the occasion. There were tins of golden syrup, golden-topped turnips, golden spangled Hamburgs, golden opinions, &c., &c.

The clans M'Murray and M'Phun were present in great force, numbering in all over ten persons, and included friends, relations, lodgers, and grand-lodgers. The venerable couple, though now long past the meridian of life, are still hale and hearty, and move about with a vigour and elasticity of step that might be envied by those who are twelve or fourteen stones their seniors.

The gathering took the form of a grand toffie, cheugh jean, and blackmann shine, and was ably presided over by the Rev. Solomon Sleekit, of the Soulis Street Mission Home, who, strange to say, had the distinguished honour of uniting the interesting couple in the solemn bonds of landlady and lodgers' money away back half-a-century ago.

A sumptuous repast of toffie chips, cheugh jean

cutlets, and filleted blackmann, washed down by sparkling beakers of brown Robin, and foaming bumpers of nut brown treacle ale, was served up by mine host of the Emporium; of which the large company assembled partook with great gusto, as was evinced by the repeated calls for more that resounded throughout the building. After having done ample justice to the good things of this life, "The King and his Royal Progeny" were toasted, till I am sure they must have been brown on both sides.

Then the Chairman, in a few felicitous remarks, gave "The Unmarried Couple." In doing so he said that it gave him the greatest pleasure to be present on this occasion, for the purpose of congratulating the old couple on the attainment of this their golden celibacy. A position, he believed, which they had honestly and deservedly won by the patient, persevering, and painstaking way in which they had combated all attempts to oust them from their state of single blessedness; a position, he made bold to say, the celebration of which was the most unique in the history of the town, and he had therefore very much pleasure, in name of the large company assembled and himself, in handing over to Mr M'Phun a beautiful pair of trousers stretchers for himself, along with a purse of pure Russian leather well filled with store tokens, and a handsome fir-lined washing board for his landlady. He hoped that they would still continue to enjoy that large measure of health which they had hitherto enjoyed, and that they might be long spared to the public, and themselves. (Cheers.)

On rising to his feet to reply, Pate was greeted with a terrific burst of applause that shook the building to its very foundations and knocked down his landlady's back hair. When silence was restored, he said, "Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, there are moments in a man's lifetime when he feels mournfully mirthful, and doesn't know whether to laugh or cry. Again, there are times when he feels hilariously sad, and is in doubt as to whether he should cry or laugh. Gentlemen, I am in either of these positions, or both. Believe me that your kindness has so completely overwhelmed me that I do not know exactly whether I am standing on my heels or upon my feet; and how I am to thank you for those princely and munificent gifts, which you in your goodness have seen fit to bestow upon us to-night, I am at a loss to know.

"But, if my utterances are all too inadequate to convey to you my feelings on this occasion, I hope you will take it for granted that deep down in the interminable depths of my mind there are whole volumes of verbs, adverbs, prepositions, adjectives, and conjunctions, all seething, tumbling, and surging in endeavour to find outlet. Ah, ah—um-um-m-m" —here he came to a complete standstill.

The silence that ensued was most painful, and was broken only by some one remarking, audibly enough to be heard over the whole place—"Poor fellow, his feelings are too deep for utterance." But no. It was a cheugh jean that he had unwittingly sunk his teeth into, and which had so completely glued his jaws together that he was unable to open his mouth.

The chairman kindly came to the rescue, and with the aid of a paper knife, which he used as a lever, opened the oratorical portals, and set his pent-up and imprisoned speech free.

Continuing, he said:—"When it first was mooted abroad that such an affair as this was on the *tapis*, I was thunderstruck to hear of the reception that it met with, especially in green pea and fizzing drink circles; so much so, that I began to examine myself most carefully to see if I could discover in what particular part of my anatomy lay that peculiar charm that had thus called forth such expressions of friendship and goodwill; but after a thorough and protracted search, I came to the conclusion that there was nothing in my composition that could warrant such extraordinary kindness and generosity on your part. (Hear, hear.)

"When I look upon these tangible tokens of your esteem, and think, not of their money value alone, but of the magnanimous and kindly spirit which prompted you, a thrill of sweetened electricity shoots up my spinal cord right into the roots of my hair, and I feel, as it were, my soul slowly oozing from me in streams of the most luscious tenderness and love towards all mankind, while my whole corporeal frame is labouring under—ah, ah, ah—um—ah—that is, gentlemen—I feel I am labouring under—ah, ah—labouring under"—"A pound a week," interjected his landlady, who evidently thought that she was helping him along; but it had a contrary effect. However, after floundering about

for a little he caught up the broken thread of his discourse and continued:—

"Yes, gentlemen, I am labouring under a sense of unmerited kindness, and groaning beneath a debt of the deepest obligations, which I fear I will never be able to repay. (Cheers.) Once more, gentlemen, in name of my landlady and myself, allow me to thank you for these handsome tokens of your esteem, and to express the hope that the mutual good wishes and kindly feeling that have hitherto existed between us will continue on intact to the end." Here he sat down amidst a perfect tornado of excitement, waving of hats, umbrellas, handkerchiefs, and other superfluous bunting.

The other toasts that followed were:—"The Policemen and Night Watchmen," by the chairman, replied to by Captain Brian O'Toole of the Scavenger Brigade; "The Green Pea and Fizzing Drink Trade of the Town," by Bernardina Murphiani, replied to by Mr Peter M'Phun; "Contractors for the Joiner Work of the Washing Board," by Jeremiah M'Phun, replied to by Mr Hugh Wood; "The Strangers," by a Stranger, replied to by Mr Philip Strangeways; "A Dram," by Mr M'Fuddle, responded to by the whole company; &c., &c. Songs were rendered useless at intervals by various members of the company, while Mr M'Fuddle recited with much histrionic ability "The Boy stood on the Burning Deck;" and altogether a very happy evening was spent.

A CHAPTER FROM MY LIFE.

And it came to pass, in the reign of Queen Victoria, that a certain man by the name of Peter M'Phun was in great tribulation.

And he lifted up his voice and wept, and, lo! his landlady stood before him.

And she spake unto him, saying, "Why art thou cast down, oh, my lodger? Tell me the cause of thy disquietude."

And the son that was begat of Abraham M'Phun exalted his voice, saying, "I have received a revelation, commanding me to go unto the house of the medical man and have an offending tooth plucked out."

And the son of Abraham M'Phun arose, girt up his loins, and went and sojourned in the house of the medical man for the space of three minutes and two seconds.

And the medical man spake unto him, saying, "I beseech you, lay your head well back in the chair, and open wide your mouth that I may see the abiding place of your tormentor."

And the descendant of the ancient house of M'Phun arose like a lion in his wrath, rent his garments, and vowed that he could lick the whole fraternity of superannuated idiots of doctors who thought to make fun out of him by prodding his gums with an old rusty javelin.

And he went forth from the presence of the man of medicine with an expression of extreme disgust on

his countenance, and a choice selection of the season's new expletives on his lips.

And when yet he was afar off, behold there came a voice unto him, saying, "Lodger, how has it fared with thee in the house of the stranger?"

And Peter, the son of Abraham, rudely shoved his landlady aside, and, rushing homewards, exalted his foot and kicked the cat.

MEMOIRS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

The subject of these memoirs was born of rich but respectable parents, being the only son, but seven, of an eminent and distinguished poacher who flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century. In early life the young Shakespeare was trained to follow his father's profession; but an inherent aversion to all sorts of manual labour, which he had inherited from his mother, caused him soon to turn his attention to a more profitable means of employment, viz., that of politics. Herein his marvellous gifts of lying, and a sugar-coated, patented reversible smile soon won for him the coveted and enviable position of First Loafer-in-Waiting at the Court of Queen Elizabeth.

It was while serving in this capacity that he had the misfortune to contract a severe affection of the heart for a young lady, Anne Hathaway by name. She seems to have been a woman of rare and surpassing beauty, with hair as dark as a starless night,

teeth like miniature piano keys, a nose on her face like the handle of a Grecian urn, skin as white and as pure as the driven snow, cheeks like roses, and black eyes—occasionally.

Their matrimonial rehearsal took place in a quiet, sequestered nook in her father's backyard under the umbrageous shade and rich delicious greenery of a row of pea sticks. They sat there together, alone with the stars, listening with enraptured ears to the whiskered choristers on the tiles, trilling forth their amorous love-lorn ditties to the night, and watching with strained eyes the progress of some old, antiquated slipper or brickbat that ever and anon would hurtle through the air and disappear in the darkness, or find its billet against the ribs of some unfortunate feline songstress.

He gently pressed her carefully be-larded and sweet-smelling summit against the billowy and undulating folds of his sparkling white shirt front, and cooed in tones of the most affectionate tenderness. "Hang on me like fruit, my soul, till the tree die." She looked up into his face with a smile of ineffable sweetness, placed her two little ivory-laced lips on the hirsute awning that shaded the alimentary approach to his interior. As their sentinel souls looked warily forth from the loopholes of their eyes and scanned each other aloft from their zenith to horizon, the invisible rubber band of their affections drew them closer and closer together; then the air resounded with a snap like the crack of a waggoner's whip, and the young Shakespeare—like Herr

Teufeledrockh of world-wide fame—was made immortal by a kiss.

Subsequent to this interview, he is reported to have said in a burst of gracious confidence to his friend and confidante that he had only needed an Eve to make his life a Paradise. Sad to relate, in married life he sometimes got a *neive*—oft-times two of them; for Mrs Shakespeare turned out a perfect termagant and led him the life of a football referee. She didn't "let concealment, like a worm i' the bud, feed on her damask nose." Oh, no! but on the contrary, when she was in a rage she barred him out of doors at night, hit him on the head with a bill hook, and threatened to set a book canvasser on him; till his life, became almost unbearable.

"*Anne hath a way* of her own," he observed, with a sickly smile, to his friend and boon companion, Ben Jonson, one night in the bar-room of "The Pig's Foot and Penny Whistle." He took to drink and writing poetry, and became the associate of gamblers, bruisers, and betting men, as the following little obituary notice of one of the fraternity will testify:—

Poor bruiser Bill's thrown up the sponge
  And met his last defeat.
Alas! no more he'll bounce and splore,
  Nor brawl upon the street.
A slogger grim, tackled him,
  Walloped him in his prime;
Hit him a welt below the belt,
  That knocked him out of time.

He seems to have recovered to some extent from

his drinking and dissolute habits; though his poetic malady assumed a more acute and more virulent form, as, a little later on, we find him at the head of the well-known firm of Shakespeare, Bacon, & Co., poets, playwrights, dramatists, sonneteers, and general dealers in all sorts of fancy rhyming ware—from an ode on the immortality of the soul to a nod to a blind horse. About this time the firm produced, from their own plans and specifications, the celebrated play of "Hamlet, a tragedy," in which nearly every one of the characters, with the exception of the ghost, contribute some of their best blood to the success of the piece.

It was while starring in the provinces with this sublime production that a telegram was placed in Shakespeare's hands bearing the memorable words, "Come at once; I am dying.—Your Anne." He immediately returned to Stratford-on-Avon, but only to find that his spouse and partner had "gone to that bourne from whence no traveller ever returns." So overwhelmed was he by her demise that he actually went into mourning for her, and, like Rachael of old, returned all letters of condolence with him, unopened; shut himself up in his room for two or three days, and penned the following lugubrious and mournful verses:—

Softly, ye bells, come muffle your tone,
And tell to the world my loved one is gone
Ye wandering winds in your mournful key
Come chant this sorrowful dirge with me.
Ri, tooral ooral, ooral addy di,
Right tol ooral ay.

Ye inky clouds in the open sky,
Weep, O weep, till your founts be dry,
While here I chant, in sorrow and gloom,
This requiem sad o'er her lonely tomb.
Ri, tooral ooral, ooral addy di,
Right tol ooral ay.

Ye hills and dales, ye woods and trees,
That murmur and moan in the autumn breeze,
Come join with the sorrowful sounding surge
Till the heavens resound to this doleful dirge:
Ri, tooral ooral, ooral addy di,
Right tol ooral ay.

This somewhat unseemingly behaviour on the part of our hero was attributed at the time by some of his contemporaries to softening of the brain; but we are rather inclined to think it was due to an overflow of animal spirits, and that to such an extent did the feeling grow upon him, he was latterly obliged to set a time apart from business and other pursuits wherein to retire into his closet and laugh. Some time after the death of his wife he fell into his old dissolute habits; he severed all connection with the firm which had so long borne his name, and gradually sank lower in the social scale, till he was reduced to canvassing books for a living in his native town, where he died full of years and bacteria at the advanced age of fifty-two.

THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SLAVE.

He stands, 'midst the glare of the noonday sun, on the steps of the ancient court-house. A man of herculean mould, with swarthy, sun-embrowned features, whose dark, crisp, curly hair is falling in tangled locks upon his massive shoulders, while his coal black eye is lit with that quenchless fire that betokens the race from which he sprung; a race that had long borne the indignities of the oppressor and clanked its chains in sullen obedience.

His noble brow is seamed and scarred with the fell handiwork of that ruthless tyrant whom the world is pleased to term his master. But little recks he now of his wounds and scars, for freedom's fire, which had long lain smouldering within his bosom, has just burst out into a glorious conflagration. The laws of his country have severed the cords that enthralled him, and proclaimed him, before all men, to be free.

As he realises, in all its mighty importance, the fruition of his long-cherished hopes, and feels the awakened life dancing merrily within his veins, he raises his arms wildly to Heaven, and cries aloud, in frenzied glee: "Free! Free! Free!"

> "Free as the eagle that soars above
> The cliffs of his native mountain;
> Free as the water that gushes forth
> From the cool sequestered fountain;
> Free as the barque that skims the wave,
> Where storms and breakers are rife—
> Eh! golly, I'm the happiest man alive,
> I've just been divorced from my wife."

FREEDOM OF THE BURGH TO SIR PETER M'PHUN.

The town was literally *en fete* last Saturday afternoon, for the purpose of conferring the freedom of the burgh upon Major-General Sir Peter M'Phun, of the Argyle and Tipperary Highlanders, who has just recently returned from the front. The ceremony took place in the large and spacious halls attached to the Royal Italian Green Pea and Fizzing Drink Establishment of Bernardina Murphiana. The cream-de-la-creame, as also the skim-de-la-skim milk of society, were present in their hundreds to do honour to the gallant soldier, whose deeds of daring in the field have put to the blush the proudest and most illustrious of our football captains.

The worthy Provost presided, and amongst those we noticed on the platform were many of the Magistrates and Councillors of the burgh, with their spouses. The Right Honourable Sir Malcolm M'Twolter, Lord High Keeper of the Washing House Key; The Honourable Sir Reginald O'Shaughnessy, Public Secretary to the Holm Union Blanket Association; General Cæsar Nicholas M'Lannachan, of M'Lannachan's Horse; Colonel John M'Luckie, of M'Luckie's Mules; General Hubub, General Public, and a host of other notables who graced the meeting with their brilliant and bald-headed presence.

Our worthy Provost, in a speech fairly blistering with patriotic fervour, interlarded with sweet-smelling phrases and odoriferous butterine quotations, handed

over to the guest of the day a beautiful silver-plated tea caddy, along with a free burgess ticket, thus adding one other eminent name to the long and illustrious roll of free burgesses of the town. Sir Peter, on rising to his feet, was greeted with a perfect blizzard of excitement. Men cheered and waved their hats frantically, women screamed and fainted, reporters wept, policemen swore, and altogether the scene was one that fairly pauperised and reduced to beggary any attempt at description.

After the noise had in a manner abated, the hero of a hundred rows said, "Mr Provost, ladies and gentlemen, I have been brought up here to-night before the bar of public opinion, to receive the last dread sentence of the social law. I have been found guilty by a jury of my own countrymen of the awful crime of popularity, and my sentence is, namely, that I shall be taken from here to the precincts of "The George," there to be filled with cake and wine till the hour of midnight, when I will be disposed of by the hands of the common policeman, and my body handed over to my landlady for decent interment amongst the bedclothes. A sentence, gentlemen, which I make bold to say, is far too lenient, considering the gravity of my offence. (Hear, hear, giggles and guffaws.)

"It was just after the Battle of Colenso, where General Sir Reverse Buller and his army had been repulsed, and were now (to use a well-worn phrase), sitting *tight* at Chievely, that I was standing listening one night to a German band playing 'Boyne Water,' when

suddenly, from the unplumbed depths of my interior the martial spirit of a long line of fighting ancestors arose within me, threatening to land me in the lock-up, if I did not at once rush to the nearest recruiting agency, and sign on.

"This I did, in company with several other gentlemen of patriotic leanings, who—heedless of *mal de mer*, Boer bullets, and the deadly tinned meat—were prepared to leave their homes, wives, sweethearts, landladies, kitchen ranges, and pianos, and go forth to do battle for our King, our country, and that glorious Empire on which the sun never sets, and in which the itinerant dealer in Gospel literature, and the whiskey commission agent are never off the road." (Cheers and counter cheers), during which a pro-Boer at the back of the hall cried out, "Who killed the Boer, M'Phun?" to which Sir Peter retorted:—

> 'Twas I, said the Briton,
> With very hard hitting
> I killed the Boer.

Continuing, the gallant soldier said—"On my arrival in South Africa, I was given the command of a detachment of 'The Argyle and Tipperary Highlanders,' and, gentlemen, I am proud to say that during our long and trying march from Bloemfontein to Paardeberg, over four hundred miles, two only of my comamnd had the misfortune to *fall out*, and as it was over a ration of whisky that the dispute took place, I deemed the matter of but little importance; so didn't report them at headquarters.

"On reaching the scene of hostilities, Lord

Roberts, who was at his wits' end, came up and said to me, 'M'Phun, Cronje and his burghers are laagered over there in the bed of the river, and I look to you to annex them.' Turning to my men I said, 'Men of the Argyll and Tipperary Highlanders, the raw material is over yonder out of which you are to manufacture history. The eyes of the whole world and M'Phun are upon you, do your duty, fix bayonets, charge!" Then, suddenly, one wild ringing British cheer burst from a thousand throats, rending and splitting the air in twain, all the way from Cape Colony right up to the mouth of the Zambesi River, and a mass of khaki-clad warriors rushed across the sun-baked veldt, and bore down upon the Boer trenches like an excited and insane avalanche; and, in spite of Boer smells, spread death and destruction around them at every leap.

"At this momentous moment in the affairs of our country, Lord Roberts again came galloping up, and cried excitedly, 'For heaven's sake, M'Phun, call in your men and give the rest of the Army a chance. There isn't Boer Republics sufficient in the whole of South Africa to last us a week if you go on at this rate.' So what could I do but sound the retreat, and back came my warriors, every man Jack of them looking as he had just swallowed a small commando to his own cheek, and had washed it down with the Vaal River." (Here the speaker was rudely interrupted by some one in the gallery shouting at the pitch of his voice, "What did you do with the Boer you captured, M'Phun?" "Oh, according to prece-

dent, I took compassion on him and let him go home to his Ma, sir" (mauser) was the answer.

"Well, gentlemen, we have now bagged some thousands of Boers, and a few of our own Generals, so I hope the war will soon be at an end. When we have brought Brother Boer to his knees, let us extend to him the olive branch, and soon the white flower of peace will bud, blossom, and expand, shedding its fragrance over a happy, and a united South Africa."

The speaker sat down amidst the greatest uproar that has ever been witnessed outside of a dog show. At the luncheon which followed we were privileged to have a private conversation with the noble and illustrious guest, who told us in strict confidence, that fighting the Boers was not nearly so irksome, nor yet so trying to the nerves, as this miserable burgess ticket racket; that he had been made a free burgess of nearly every burgh of any importance throughout the length and breadth of the land; and to such an extent had the thing got on his nerves, that he was beginning to see burgess tickets, and electro-plated tea caddies continually flitting before his eyes.

They were never absent from his thoughts for a moment, and occasionally he would start up at night in horror and affright and shriek at the pitch of his voice—"To arms! to arms! the Provosts and their burgess tickets are upon us." "Ah, my friend," he continued, not without some show of emotion, "I have stood unmoved on the battlefield, when the bullets were whistling all around me; I have braved

death from disease in the trenches; I have walked up to the cannon's mouth without a quiver, but the sight of a Provost and a burgess ticket completely unmans me, and makes me feel as weak and as helpless as a child. O take, take away your Provosts and free burgess tickets, and—and give me back the Boers and Paardeberg." We pitied him, shook hands, and parted, taking with us as a souvenir of our visit a prime Havana cigar.

A NOCTURNAL ROMANCE.

The black raven, Night, had gathered under her wings a jaded and weary world. A thick, heavy pall of Cimmerian gloom—that being the kind most extensively in use during that age—shrouded the city in its dusky folds. The bright silver-plated moon and eighteen carat golden stars, that were wont to be a guide and comfort to the feet of the poor, hapless inebriate, were extremely prominent by their total absence. The wind was shrieking, howling, and tearing around the chimney tops as if the disembodied spirits of a thousand politicians were stumping the dread immensity and threatening the integrity of matters celestial.

The gentle policeman, in the stern execution of his duty, had just betaken himself to the kindly shelter of a disengaged cab, and was trumpeting forth to the night his dulcet snores; when suddenly, at intervals in the storm, there came, borne onwards to

the listening ear, the wild despairing cry "Help! help! help!" Then the sharp, shrill birl of a whistle, a noise as of a rushing of many feet, and half-a-dozen stalwart myrmidons of the law closed in around the spot from which the cries emanated. There a female of that order of society known as house servants was observed to be struggling wildly with some dark object. "Speak! Who calls aloud for help?" demanded he who appeared to be the leader of the lot. She turned upon him with a pleading look in her eyes, and in a suppliant tone of voice said: "It's me, sergeant, will you help me upstairs with this scuttle of coals?" The sergeant muttered something about a dam, and stalked forth into the impenetrable gloom.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The editor of the "Correspondence" column of the London "Times," having been busy for some time back exhuming potatoes, I kindly undertook to achieve his duties for a short epoch. Fortifying myself with his facile toothpick, and surrounded by the many volumes of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," I sat myself down and endeavoured to answer the many questions that were levelled at me from every direction. How I have succeeded I will leave my readers to judge.

ADOLPHUS FITZGUSTUS writes us saying—"Will you kindly inform me, through the columns of your *valuable* paper, how I should conduct myself at the

funeral of a near and dear relative?" Certainly. The popular craze at fashionable funerals this season is the short staccato sob, which is much more becoming in young people that the prolonged melancholy howl of last year. The general tone is a deep mezzo-soprano.

CONSTANT READER.—For removing tar or ink stains from dress goods, effectively—a pair of scissors.

LOTHAIR informs us that he has become deeply enamoured of a gushing young goddess of seventeen, and vows that he cannot live without her. That being the case, we would advise "Lothair" to get the gushing goddess to swallow him, so that he may live within her.

HOUSEWIFE.—Yes. Preserve makers are actually adulterating their marmalade with oranges, the turnip crop having failed this year.

ANXIOUS INQUIRER.—The original version of the poem you refer to is as follows:—

> "Mary had a little lamb
> That followed her, because
> The little lady had the lamb
> With mint and caper sauce."

YOUNG LOCHINVAR asks if it is consistent with the rules of etiquette to crack walnuts with a lady. No, the usual way is to take a hammer or your teeth.

D. F. N.—A suitable inscription for the tombstone of a photographer would be—King Death cried follow me, and he answered in the negative.

BACCHUS.—A man may be considered the worse of liquor when he is endeavouring to put on his cap

with the shoe-lifter, or attempting to snuff the candle with a clothes pin.

BILL SYKES.—If, as you say, all the dogs in your neighbourhood have failed to draw your badger, your only resource is to put a strong mustard blister on the box, and, if that don't succeed in fetching him, then don't badger us any more with your questions.

DOMESTICUS.—The simplest and easiest method for stripping leeches is to put them through the clothes wringer.

CLODHOPPER.—No, Mary Queen of Scots was not burned at the stake; like yourself, she was be(e)-headed.

BREWER.—A good recipe for lime juice is to take a peck or two of good Arden lime and add two or three gallons of pure spring water. Mix well together; then boil over a slow fire. Strain through a two-inch riddle and bottle for future use.

After I had completed my task, I was sitting enjoying my cigar, with my chair tilted backwards, and my feet resting on the table, when the door suddenly burst open, and who should walk into the apartment but the managing editor himself. After carefully looking over what I had written, he remarked, with a contemptuous shrug of the nose, "Pshaw!" "Who is P. Shaw? Is he a literary man?" I asked. He was apparently displeased with this observation; at least I inferred as much from the fact of his having seized me in a violent manner, and sat me down upon the fire, threatening to hold me there till the saliva in my mouth came to the boil.

After getting rid of his embraces, I walked boldly up to him, and, holding my fist in the immediate vicinity of his nose, thundered savagely—"If this should meet the eye of one Peter Shaw, editor of the 'Times,' he will hear of something to his disadvantage." He immediately retaliated with—"Owing to the great pressure on our space you are unavoidably held over." So, suiting the action to the word, he raised the window and suspended me for a moment or two in mid air; then let me fall into a large water butt; from whence I was fished out by a humane policeman, who happened to be passing at the time. Now it is rumoured about the city that I have a brick in my possession that is to be used for other than building purposes.

THE LOST PEDIGREE.

(From the "Kilmarnock Standard" of December 22, 1900.)

Last week, at the request of our worthy Postmaster, we inserted copy of a letter received by him from a correspondent in America desirous of certain information which he was unable to give. In view of what follows, the letter had better be reprinted:

Dear Sir,—Knowing little of Scotland and its county divisions, I send these lines, like a waif cast upon the sea, hoping you will be good enough to

try to give me a little information on the subject I will note below. I enclose a return postage stamp. A Scotchman, by name Robert Campbell, came from Kilmarnock parish to America about 1835. He married and settled in Fairfield, Conn., where he died some 25 years ago. He left brothers and sisters at home, some of whom have followed him at intervals to the United States. Do that family of Campbells belong to the same line as the Duke of Argyle? Are they the same clan of Campbells? Can you tell me, or put me in the way of getting such knowledge? Did the family to which Robert belonged rank among the peasant clan? Were they owners of farms of their own, or renting from the aristocratic clan, or were they tradesmen? I will be glad if you can tell me something on these lines, particularly if the family belongs to the Argyle Campbells. If I hear from you I will write further. Please address,

MRS HENRY F. QUINHARD,
Sound Beach, Fairfield Co.,
Conn., U.S.A.

We respectfully commended the above letter to the attention of our valued contributor, Mr Pate M'Phun, and he has very kindly made enquiries, the result of which will be found in the following communication.

Mr Editor,—Dear Sir,—In looking over the genealogical table of the great human family I find that the Campbells in question are descended, in a

long zig-zag line (more zig than zag), from the Campbells of Argyll. In the old statistical accounts for the year thirteen hundred and nineteen I came across a blank space which shows unmistakable signs of having been reserved for the registration of the birth of one Michael Moriarty M'Guire Campbell, who, I believe, was the real and original founder of this branch of the family. Following up this important clue I find that in the year thirteen hundred and thirty-eight the said Michael Moriarty M'Guire Campbell packed up all his belongings and suddenly left Inveraray behind him. Why he did so I am at loss to understand, unless it was because he was unable to carry it away with him.

Suffice it to say that he left his native place on or about that date and migrated to Ayrshire, where he settled in a place called Old Rome; this in spite of the fact that he had received a very polite and pressing invitation from his numerous friends and creditors to *settle* in Inveraray. Here he married a lady of means and settled down instead of settling up. The result of this union was a daughter, who became, in due time, a noted beauty, and was consequently in great demand at all beauty shows, such as weddings, balls, soirees, and church bazaars. It was said that her skin was so pure and so clear that you could easily distinguish a glass of wine—in fact, a whole barrelful—in its descent down her throat. She afterwards became known as the heroine of that beautiful song, entitled—"Bonnie Mary of Ayr Jile," which is, I believe, a corruption of Argyll.

She got married to a Count (to account), and retired with him to his beautiful suburban residence on the banks of the classic Irvine, where she lived to a green old age, deeply regretted by a large circle of sorrowing relations and friends. This lady had a son, one Phineas Fitzwilliam M'Callum Campbell, who was at one time connected with the Argyll family, but was subsequently disowned by the chief of the clan for the part he took in the sour milk rebellion of fourteen forty-five. He afterwards became a wanderer on the face of the earth; joining an itinerant band of broken-down millionaires who visited every town, village, and hamlet on the civilised globe, exploiting the people with glowing tales of Spanish hidden treasure. He wound up a long and disreputable life by committing matrimony with a poor peasant girl named Gwendoline M'Luckie.

The lineal descendants of this couple continue, in an unbroken disjointed line, down to the latter part of the seventeenth century, when I find an indirect offshoot of the said Phineas and Gwendoline M'Luckie Campbell living on the patrimonial estates in the vicinity of Gargieston. I have heard old people say, that every day, when the weather was fine, his one-wheeled equipage could be seen rolling down the old Bullet Road, with the noble and high-spirited indirect heir to the great M'Callum Mhor between the trams, beaming kindly upon the passers by, and dispensing buttermilk with a lavish hand to the numerous dependants on his bounty. Without doubt this was the grandfather of the said Robert Campbell *who sailed to* America and settled in Fairfield, Conn.

Now, Mr Editor, I hope I have proved, to the satisfaction of the lady and yourself, that the Campbells in question and the Campbells of Argyllshire are sprung from one and the same stock. If not, I hope you will bear with me, as it is very difficult work running a pedigree to earth. To use a well-worn maxim, it is easier for a Cammel to go thro' the Bankruptcy Court than for a poor man to trace a long-lost, elusive, and slippery pedigree.

ON THE DOMESTIC CAT.

The cat is a domestic animal, and, unlike the tiger, on which it is a parody, it is of a social nature, and not at all averse to the milk of human kindness. It is of oblong shape, and about the size of an overgrown kitten. It has four legs with hooks on the end of them, which enable it to run up a pole with the same ease and facility that a plumber or gas collector will run up an account. Its body is covered with a thick, heavy coat of fur which is of some value to mankind, but of more value to the cat.

I never saw but one cat in my life which was not fond of cream, and it was a stuffed one. There are various kinds of cats—the white cat, the grey cat, the black cat, the brief-tailed cat, and the cat with the nine tails. The brief-tailed cat is called the Manx or Isle of Man cat; the cat with the long tail

is that darned howling imp of Satan which infests our backyard. Dogs are the negation of cats. Somehow they don't appear to get on together. Probably the cat feels *worried* by the attentions of the dog.

I once saw a dog pay his *devours* to a cat, and the event was as entertaining as a Ward meeting. She was sitting by the fireside making her toilet when her visitor announced himself. She immediately got up, and, after stretching herself, smiled a cynical smile, as much as to say, "Who the d—— sent for you?" Her tail began to bristle and swell; her eyes assumed a bottle greenish glare; her nose curled in scorn; there was a general rising of cat along the whole line, from one end of the spinal cord to the other, a sharp hissing sound like an escape of steam, and from the way that his dogship tore out of the apartment, howling, it was apparent, to the most casual observer, that she had not turned her blunt end to him.

If there is one thing I envy about cats it is this, that they have got no politics. The Church may be in danger; the integrity of the empire may be at stake; our foreign relations strained to the uttermost; still our cat maintains his usual look of calm stolid indifference. This is said to be through philosophy on the part of the cat, but I am afraid that it is through laziness.

But though they do not intermeddle in Church or State affairs, they have much in common with their whiskered brethren of St. Stephen's; with these political cats who purr and fawn around, and rub fur with their superiors in office, till their end is attained;

then loll about in indolence and ease on the hearth-rug of prosperity, and enjoy the fruits of their sinecure office with as much apparent relish as the best constituted cat in Christendom. It is the cat some of them need badly.

EXTRACTS FROM MY ALMANAC.

AFTER THE METHOD OF "THE BELFAST ALMANAC."

New Year's Day. Wind high.

Higher.

The *higher* system still prevails.

Parliament, and one of my landlady's hens, commence to sit.

All night's sitting.

There is a boom in umbrellas.

Abraham Lincoln killed in an explosion.

Weather dry. So am I.

Patrick Coffee is put through the mill of cross-examination at the Parnellite inquiry.

Slight frost sets in on this date, and a memorable ice accident doesn't take place, whereby several people meet with a providential escape.

Piggott, the forger, succumbs to lead poisoning.

Frost continues with alarming severity, and several young couples are frozen together for life.

Dr Pritchard dies from exposure.

Great drought in Kilmarnock; public-houses thrown open to the public.

Robert Burns still dead. His death has now became chronic.

Transplant lettuces, leeks, and troublesome mothers-in-law on or about this date.

A slight thaw sets in, and my landlady pays me back that half-sovereign she owed.

Great limited Lie-ability Company formed to bring up the price of sugar.

Judas Iscariot born.

Inter your potatoes, and bury your last year's manure on or about this date.

The body of the late Pate M'Phun is exhumed from its last resting place—under the bed clothes.

Ascension Day. Santos Doumont goes up in his balloon.

Threatened absence of a heavy downfall of snow.

Still threatening.

Duke of Wellington died.

General Boulanger *ass.*

Easterly winds and catarrhal complaints set in, and there is a general demand for Walker's Alcoholic Lotion.

Belladonna plasters first used as articles of wearing apparel in England.

Borrowing days set in, and my landlady signalises the event by borrowing a fiver of me.

More borrowing days.

Battle of Austerlitz fought.

Widow Murray *dyed.*

House cleanings, tea dinners, and swearing begin.

The Witch of Endor cremated.

Boisterous weather. Alternate showers of hail, rain, snow, sleet, meteors, &c., &c.

The weather clerk throws up his situation.

> If the winds be westerly,
> If flies be pesterly,
> If rooks be on your house-top sitting,
> If cocks be crowing, and glow-worms glowing,
> There's sure to be rain—weather permitting.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

Alas! Alas! I am in the hands of the doctors. They say my stomach is out of order, and that I have got a very bad tongue—a very bad tongue indeed, but it ain't half so bad as my landlady's. She has just left me lying in the soft embraces of a big one-horse power mustard plaster. Already I begin to feel a nice, soothing, pleasant glow of heat steal gently through my frame. Oh, but this is delightful.

Ha, it is getting on more intimate terms with me now; it has just playfully lapped the pit of my stomach with its fiery tongue, causing me to use abusive language. Apparently it don't like back talk, as it is beginning to kick, bite, twinge, burn, and tear around generally. I clench my teeth and mutter scornfully—"Oh, mustard plaster, I dare thee to do thy worst!" As if in answer to this challenge, great Vesuvius! the blasted thing is roasting, burning,

scorching me alive. Shortly I am tearing madly through the apartment, shrieking "fire" at the pitch of my voice, with linen rags, mustard, and profanity flying from me at every leap.

Now I am in bed again; my landlady is bending patiently over me. "We are born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards," she is saying by way of consolation. "Yes," I return, "but the darned things did not all fly upwards; they flew inwards, outwards, downwards, upwards, and in every other conceivable direction."

I am better now. I have just had a good refreshing sleep. My landlady is still at her post. "I wish to goodness you would stop that singing, it makes my head ache so," I observe to her, looking up with a worried expression on my face. "Singing singing! who is singing?" she returns, evidently in a quandary. "Why, were you not singing just now?" I retort, somewhat angrily. "Great goodness! it was a barrow, going through the entry, that appears to be greatly in need of grease," she replies. "Then I humbly beg your, or rather I ought to beg the barrow's pardon," I return. "M'Phun," she says, lifting the corner of her apron to her eye, "it is too bad of you; you are always depreciating my talents as a songstress when you know that I sing 'Behind yon hills where Lugar flows,' very sweetly." "As long as you continue to sing behind the Lugar hills I have not the least objection," I return, "but when you begin to screech and howl here and annoy your lodger it's a thing I won't put up with." "I am

sure I can sing 'The Vacant Chair' anyhow," she answers. "Yes, you have hit it now. I'll back you to sing a chair vacant against a whole consignment of nigger minstrels or music hall *prima donnas* at any time," I reply. This has silenced her.

My lodgings have now become the resort of all the gossips of the neighbourhood. To keep them at safe distance I am obliged to lead them to suppose that I am suffering from smallpox. One of them makes the suggestion that perhaps it may be the *glass* pox. There is a depth of meaning in her observations that causes me considerable annoyance.

The parson's lady called with a jugful of soup, which had a very watery taste. I remarked to her, "You must make your soup out of the identical water that your chickens have been in the habit of bathing in?" The parson's lady does not call now. I am out of bed again, and on my way to instruct my medical advisers in the art of blood-letting.

AT THE FLOWER SHOW.

I was present at an exhibition of flowers the other evening. I was arrayed in my gayest foliage, while my gold-headed cane was the envy of all the mashers present; and if the stump of a prime Havana cigar protruded from my countenance, why, that was a matter of little moment, and is scarcely worth mentioning.

"Who are you? and what do you want?" said a man with a rosette on his coat, and a roseate hue on his face, as I was about to pass in, in the usual way. "I am the gentleman who culls those beautiful flowers of thought from the garden of the brain, and arranges them into pleasing little bouquets for presentation to the public," I replied, with a look of conscious pride. "Then you are not an exhibitor?" he said, with a disappointed air. "No," I said, "I am not a showman; but my landlady's sister-in-law's husband has contributed a big purple-topp'd turnip towards the success of your green grocery."

It was on the strength of this connection that I was allowed to pass—and, great Gladstone, what a sight!—flowers, fruits, and vegetables, of every hue and description, were around me in endless profusion. Here were *hot-house plants*—married men; *crab apples*—spinsters; *monkeys' puzzles*—mashers; *cabbage heads*—town councillors; *holly plants*—parsons; *blush roses*—young ladies; &c., &c.—all mixed up in chaotic confusion.

It was while mingling in this "madding crowd's ignoble strife" that I had the misfortune to get one of my buttons entangled in a lady's dress; whereupon a gentleman, near, rudely observed, "The gay and festive M'Phun has at last formed an *attachment*; and an illicit one too," he added, prodding me in the ribs with his umbrella. "How do you know it is an illicit one?" I said, with a frown that would have withered a book canvasser. "Because I once had the honour of officiating in the capacity of groom at

her wedding," he returned with a saddened air. "Ha," I said, the relationship beginning to dawn upon me, "this will be your better half." "You have hit it," he said, "I feel as if I had a half too much." With these remarks he oozed through a chink in the crowd and was gone.

"Are you a gardener?" I inquired of a green-looking youth of about eighteen summers, who, in the centre of a group of young ladies, was busy sniffing a musk rose. "I am," he said, "but not a Free Gardener." The young ladies giggled. Now, being a very sensitive plant, naturally I felt a little taken aback by this answer.

As my reputation as a joker was at stake, I summoned all the artillery of my wits, and immediately returned to the attack with, "Are you in the floral department of the business, or do you occupy the less exalted position of potato resurrectionist?" "No," he said, "I translate the manure for the Jerusalem artichokes." "Then it would not take much *art to choke you*," I said, beginning to display that irascibility of temper for which I have been so long famed. "Probably not," he said, "but you might be presented with a *nosegay* during the operation." If a friend had not got himself engrafted on to my coat tails and transplanted me I would have fallen on that young man's neck and embraced him.

I was just sitting in a bower of coolest foliage, made musical by a string band, which was discoursing sweet breaches of the peace in my enraptured ear, when a gentleman in black clothes came up and

said, "Have you seen my prize parsnip, M'Phun?" "I have seen you parse a few nips in my time," I jocularly remarked, "and you looked as if you prized them, judging from the way that you smacked your lips." "Come, come, no levity; if ever you were serious in your life let it be now, and analyse that," he said, placing a large conical-shaped root in my hand. "Well," I said, assuming a Glenfield Rambler sort of air, "that is a—a—um—a—as fine a specimen of the Parsniperus, Parsniperapus, or Parsnipula, a bulbous root that is to be found growing wild in the woods in and around Ayrshire, as ever it has been my lot to see. "Fudge," he said, and stalked away, much to my relief, as I had just got my eye on a fine specimen of the daughters of Eve.

She was standing before a huge pile of apples with her purse in her hand, and a look in her eye that evidently meant business. "These are Tam Montgomerys, miss," I said, pointing to the tempting array of fruit before her. She turned round upon me with, oh! such a benign countenance—not a twelve-by-nine countenance like my landlady's, but a real genuine seraphic dial plate that made you wonder why she did not at once take wings and fly away.

She remarked, in the sweetest tones, "Then would you kindly inquire if Mr Montgomery will let me have a pound or two, as I have taken such a fancy to them?" "Ah, miss," I said, "you misunderstand. That is the name of the apple which has so arrested your attention, and how it has derived its peculiar

cognomen I am at a loss to say, unless it be that the immortal Tam had a special liking for this kind of fruit. I wish to goodness I was an apple," I added, with a sigh. "Oh," she said, "and what kind of an apple?" "The apple of somebody's eye," I returned, giving her a look that ought to have fetched her at once, but it didn't. It brought some other body, and there was a dull heavy thud like a brick coming into violent contact with a sack full of flour, and—and, Mr Editor, you may utilise that sitting of mine in the Laigh Kirk now, as it is not likely I will need it again for some time to come.

That evening, recounting my adventures to my landlady, that interested female sighed once or twice, looked me straight in the face, and said, "I wonner, M'Phun, that instead o' rinnin' gallivantin' aboot the toun and wearin' the buits aff yer feet, and gettin' yersel' intae nae sma' amount o' trouble forbye, ye dinna settle doon and tak' a bit wife tae yersel'." "I do not object to take a bit wife," I said, getting up and surveying her huge proportions, "but the trouble is that I would be obliged to take a whole one." At this stage she reached for the poker, and, to save further argument, I retired.

AN ATTACK OF POETRY.

"What is the matter with you, M'Phun?" inquired my landlady the other morning as I appeared at the breakfast table. "Matter," I returned; "don't you realise that this beautiful Spring morning stirs to its very depths my poetic soul? Stand aside, woman, my rampant Muse is just now expanding her wings and soaring upwards with the following meed of praise on her lips: 'Hail! hail! all hail! gentle Spring, thou first-born of the seasons.' O, thou great bill-sticker in advance of the coming show of the year, when I see thy tiny hand-bills of green and white peering at me from their beds of snow, and listen to the vocal choir of feathered prima donnas trilling forth their impassioned lays, my heart swells exultant in my breast, threatening to send the buttons spinning from my black silk waistcoat.

"The halls of memory," I continued, rapturously, "contain no more pleasing recollections than those of the balmy spring-time of our youth, when careless, joyous, and free we used to romp on the hillsides, gathering wild flowers, tracking the wild bumble-bee to his lair, or leading, captive, by the loose part of our trousers the gamekeeper's big mastiff dog."

"M'Phun," she seriously interposed, "go back to your bed like a man, and I will put a nice, fiery fly blister on your head; and if you do not feel any better by supper time I will call in the doctor." "Go away, woman," I returned with a lofty air,

"you are an obstructionist in the paths of immortality; you have no soul; you care not to go out into the green fields to drink inspiration at the fount of Nature; or feast your eyes on the wild woodland scenery of your native land. You prefer rather to go out into the greengrocer's shop and haggle with the salesman over a pennyworth of onions, attend bargain sales, or to wander about the grey, dusty streets and drink inspiration at milliners' shop windows, feasting your eyes on the wild woodland scenery of some new Spring bonnet or picture hat." "Bless me," she returned, eyeing me warily, "he is getting worse and worse. I am at my wits' end what to do with him.

I solemnly assured her that there was nothing the matter with me physically; that it was only my poetic soul gone on the rampage, an event which may occasionally occur, seeing that I have turned poet. "Then you have not got a headache after all?" she said graciously. "I am sure it will be nice to have a real live poet in the house for a lodger," she continued. "I suppose you will let your hair grow long, wear black clothes, and always walk about the streets with your head down, same as poets we read of?"

"Do you take me for a travelling mountebank, that I should walk with my head in the position you indicate?" I retorted lustily. "No, madam, I prefer rather to walk with my feet down; it is a much easier method of locomotion." "Then, as this is my birthday, you might make me a nice fashionable

birthday ode, same as Lord Tennyson does for members of the Royal Family." So pleased to oblige her I sat down and dashed off the following lines:—

Sound your trumpets, bang your drums,
Unfurl your banners to the sky,
Merrily quaff the rosy wine;
Bid cankered Care and Sorrow fly.
Sing out, wild warblers of the woods;
Bold chanticleer, exalt your voice;
Ye echoes, join the tuneful choir;
All creeping things on earth rejoice.
We celebrate the natal day
Of the fascinating Widow Murray,
Who is exactly forty-three
This day, the tenth of February.

"Forty-three, you villain!" she said, reaching for the kitchen poker with an angry look in her eye, and as she had been taking lessons in fine art poker work, I made a rapid but well-organised retreat under the bed, where I lay until relieved by the kindly interposition of the neighbours.

ADDRESS TO THE ELECTORS.

"Pate M'Phun will give utterance to a few political ideas in presence of the electors on Monday night, the 7th inst., at eight o'clock prompt." Such was the announcement that stared at you from every public building, barricade, and billposting station in town. It created quite a furore. The people turned out *en masse* to welcome the working man's candidate, and great pioneer of reform.

I was accompanied to the platform by a great and influential body of supporters, consisting of an Ex-Town Councillor, two retired publicans, a night policeman, and a sagacious big retriever dog. The Councillor was called to the chair, and after briefly patting me on the back, begged the audience to give me a patient and attentive hearing. On rising to my feet I was greeted with a perfect storm of applause, mingled with hooting and yells of derision.

On the noise subsiding, I began somewhat as follows: "Mr Chairman and gentlemen, when first called upon to give up my reputation for public dissection by coming forward as a candidate for Parliamentary honours, it was with fear and misgiving as to my abilities to acquit myself with anything like satisfaction to a discriminating public and to myself that I gave my consent.

"But hearing that I could have an original speech for the matter of two or three shillings from my newsagent, I immediately fortified myself with one, and the result is I am here to state my views in as clear and as explicit a manner as possible on all the important questions that are at present exercising the great public mind." "Well done, old blowhard," shouted an elector in the body of the hall. "It's a blow hard you stand greatly in need of," I returned, good-naturedly, which evidently had the effect of silencing him.

"Now, gentlemen," I continued, "I do not wish to say a word in disparagement of my opponent who had the honour of addressing you here on a previous

occasion. No; far from it. But this I will say, that he was virtually addressing a meeting of his creditors; that the promises he made on that occasion he never intends to fulfil—indeed, never will be in a position to fulfil. He will fail in the composition. He is a swindler and a thief; he once embezzled another man's wife and fled the country, while his old mother's funeral expenses are standing against him in the undertaker's books as a lasting disgrace.

"I appeal to you, as an independent and intelligent electorate, not to, practically, disfranchise yourselves by voting for a man who squints so badly that it is impossible for him ever to catch the eye of the Speaker." Great excitement, in the midst of which a prominent elector got up and denounced me as a political Dick Turpin who would blow out the brains of all who happened to differ from him in political matters. "Well," I returned, "this enterprising highwayman will not start on a wild goose chase by coming your way when he wants to indulge in his favourite pastime.

"Now, gentlemen, the first question, which I will just lightly touch upon, is that of Disestablishment of the Church. Well, I am not prepared to go in for that. It has not just yet become fashionable; and, think you, if ever it does become so that we will stand idly by and see that glorious old institution destroyed wherein whose walls our forefathers have slumbered peacefully for generations, and wherein our foremothers have exhibited their new Spring

bonnets, and quietly sucked their pennyworths of peppermint lozenges in blissful security for over two centuries? Think you we will stand idly by and see that grand old edifice laid in ashes by a ruthless horde of vile fanatics without at least striking a blow in its defence?" "Bravo, M'Phun, that's a capital sentence and ought to be carried out to the letter," ironically exclaimed a pronounced Disestablisher. "I am afraid the *capital sentence* will be carried out in your case if you do not change your opinions about the rights of property," I returned, casting upon him a look of severe rebuke.

"The next question, gentlemen, to which I have given my most serious and undivided attention, is that of the projected reform of the House of Lords. Now, this is a question that the country is already sitting upon, and it is fairly squealing for reform. But how is it to be accomplished? We cannot get it to reform itself. No. Then I believe the only practical solution of the difficulty is to let loose the British lion amongst its members; and if that interesting quadruped don't enjoy himself over the lordly fare, then I do not know anything of the nature of the brute." (Groans, and cries of "Shut up, shut up.") "Yes," I continued, paying no heed to the intended insult, "I have all along been in favour of the early closing movement, and consider that all the employers of labour ought to shut up, and that at a reasonable time, to allow of their employees having a little recreation and amusement after their day's work is done. I am therefore in favour of

lessening the hours of labour except in cases of hard labour, and in that case I would advise an appeal for a commutation of the sentence.

"I am also in favour of free education, local self-government, the abolition of perpetual pensions, &c., &c., &c. Now, gentlemen, before I resume my seat I would just like to remark that I am open to answer, to the best of my abilities, any question upon such subjects as I have omitted to touch upon in my speech." Here I squatted. Then up bounced a tall, gaunt female, with a large gingham umbrella in her hand, and said in the shrill, sharp tones of my landlady, for 'twas none other: "Is Mr M'Phun in favour of extending the suffrage to women?" "Well," I returned, "women have two important domestic duties to attend to before they intermeddle with State affairs." "And what are these, pray?" she returned, rather sharply. "Twins, madam, twins," I retorted. That interesting woman immediately turned round and left the marks of her teeth in the back of the form she had been sitting upon.

"Would the Honourable Mr M'Phun plump for a Bill, if brought in by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, for the entire abolition of the liquor traffic?" cried an elector in a clear tragic voice. "The Honourable Mr M'Phun will leave the clouds to plump for such a Bill, seeing that they hold the same watery principles," I returned, sneeringly.

"Is Mr M'Phun in favour of the 'Dual Control' arrangement, as entered into by France and Britain, for the better government of Egypt?" "John

Simpkins," I returned, "you have got enough to do with the Dual Control at home." This proved satisfactory, as it is well known he hasn't the life of a dog with his wife and mother-in-law.

"Is Mr M'Phun in favour of the protection of all kinds of ground game?" "Yes, all kinds of game, with the exception of Welsh Rabbits," I returned, getting rather riled at their persistent and impertinent catechising. "Is the Honourable Mr M'Phun in favour of the late Government's foreign policy?" "The Honourable Mr M'Phun is in favour of all foreign policies, red-hot wars, whisky and water, dynamite, Mr Parnell, Burke and Hare, and the Devil!" I roared, fairly losing my temper, and strutting up and down the platform like another Goliath defying the hosts of Israel.

"Mr M'Phun, Mr M'Phun, this is madness!" cried my chairman, grabbing me by the coat tails and endeavouring to drag me down into a seat. "Of course it is. I never was as mad in all my life, and if there is any elector here who wishes the conceit taken out of him let him step up here, and if I do not make his last dozen of cartes-de-visite useless to him my name's not Pate M'Phun!" I shrieked, endeavouring to wriggle myself free from his grasp. The noise and excitement became so intense that my supporters got up in a body and dragged me forcibly from the platform, and the meeting broke up in the wildest disorder.

LETTER FROM ABROAD TO MY LANDLADY.

Buffalo Creek, Nov. 1, 1890.

MY DEAR MADAM,—When I think on how many gallons of salt water and how many cubic feet of ozone lie between you and me, who were once so Damon and Pythias-like in our alliance, a tear (not the result of peeling onions, but a genuine saline drop of the "Dear mother, I've come home to die" texture) suddenly wells up from the innermost fount of my being, and after meandering slowly down my nose, falls with a splash upon the paper before me as I write. Ah, well. Here am I, far away from home, friends, relations, and creditors, situated on the extreme selvage of civilisation, with nothing but the cerulean blue, the boundless prairie, and an old log cabin around me.

> "O why left I my hame?
> Why did I cross the deep?"

sighed the Scottish emigrant of old, with a sigh never equalled outside the Court of *Assighs*. And if he did not leave his home and cross the billowy wave in a vain endeavour to escape the shallows and miseries of life, or to try to earn as much hard cash as would pay for his board and lodgings on this old mud ball of ours, then I treat the matter as some intricate conundrum, and in the undying language of the burnt-cork minstrel exclaim, "I gives it up."

My case is somewhat similar to his, madam. I am home-sick, and, like Lot's wife, regardless of rock salt and my reputation, I look fondly over my shoulder upon the scenes which I have left behind me. As I do so a long, low, wailing sob of anguish comes up through the long-drawn aisles and fretting vaults of my hollow anatomy; threatening dire destruction to my brand-new liver pad, and causing the cat to start up with an expression upon its face that seems to say, "Jewhilikins! I did not think you were loaded, M'Phun."

But, after all, madam, this is a glorious country to keep away from. Anyone with the ordinary amount of industry and intelligence, and with a little capital at his back, can make a good thing out of this place by simply staying at home. If we believe the emigration agents, old Dame Nature is, at all times, itching all over with a harvest, and sighing for some one to come out and scratch her. But she isn't, by a darned sight. She is just itching all over, every time, with swamp fevers, horse thieves, bands of howling savages, and other itinerant dealers in gore, who make it their business to go prowling around among the settlers, harrowing, burning, and slaying, and letting the soul out of everyone with whom they come in contact.

A small party of these wholesale murderers, funeral outfitters, and general cemetery furnishers surrounded my shanty one morning not long ago—shrieking, yelling, and brandishing their tomahawks in a style that would have graced one of your

Established Kirk elections. The chief, a tall mahogany-coloured brave, of the Dan Fitzsimmons style of architecture, was strutting around in all the majesty and glory of war paint, and putting on airs like another Ajax defying the lightning, and it was evident to me that airs were almost the only thing he had on.

Taking in at a glance the strength of the enemy and my own meagre resources—for, to make use of a quotation, "there was nobody in the house but me and the cat"—I hoisted a flag of truce, which was an old copy of the *Standard*, on the end of a stick. This signal act of policy on my part was immediately followed by a complete cessation of hostilities. So, throwing open wide the door, I approached the chief, who greeted me with a smile that was a cross between a young boarding school miss's simper and a yawning churchyard. I began:—

"Great chief of the Wampoos, mighty reaper of scalps, eminent and distinguished blood-letter, meat carver in ordinary to his Satanic Majesty, the *pale* face presents his compliments to you and hopes you will do him the honour of joining him in a glass or two of Johnnie Walker." "Ha," he said, "does the pale face think that he will reach the poor Indian's heart through his stomach?" "No," I said, "I'm afraid that were I to reach the seat of your affections in the manner you indicate you would have a bad attack of the dyspepsia." "Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Begorra that's a good one, M'Phoon; I see you are still subject to these joking fits of

yours," he said, slapping his thigh and laughing till the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Great Jerusalem!" I said, starting back and gazing upon him in open-mouthed wonder and astonishment, "who the —— are you?" "Why, bless me heart, M'Phoon, don't you know me?" he said; "don't you remember big Mike Rafferty who used to eat liver at the Fair, and who used to lodge with old widow Mulrooney in the College Wynd?" "And—and—is it really you after all, Mike?" I gasped, falling upon his neck and embracing him as if he were a long lost brother. "Why, where have you been, and what have you been doing all these years?"

"Bedad, an' it's none other than myself," he said. "I've been travelling with a menagerie as usual, since I came to these parts, doing the wild man business, and was getting along pretty comfortably too, till one day I had a row with the manager over the inferior quality of the liver supplied me; so I left, started a wild west show on my own account, and hearing that you were here, I thought I would come over some fine morning and surprise you. So, there! you have the whole affair in a nutshell."

Matters being thus explained, we adjourned to my shanty, where we spent the rest of the day in feasting and rejoicing—so much so that when the time came for them to take their departure the whole of the wild west show were half-seas over, with the exception of Mike, who, to continue the metaphor, was safely landed—that is, he was drunk, fatally

drunk, and his companions bore him away on a shutter singing, "Britons never, never, never shall be slaves," and I saw them no more.

This little incident, my dear madam, that I have endeavoured to depict for your edification, is only one out of many which are occurring here every other day, though I am sorry to say that they do not all tend to the same happy conclusion. There seems to be a peculiar craze here for murders of the finer sort, such as drownings, poisonings, &c., &c., but the latest agony in this line is the silk rope system of doing business, which is said to be more becoming to a gentleman of a sensitive and *high-strung* nature than the more vlugar and unmannerly bowie-knife slashings of last season.

Now, to what do we attribute this demoralising state of affairs, and this utter disregard of human life? Why, not so much to the laxity of the law, say I, as to the want of the wholesome and leavening influence of woman. Lovely woman, whose beauty draws us, as it were with a single hair, out of ourselves and our own sordid desires to a higher, a purer, and a more healthy atmosphere (though some of them do not confine themselves to the single hair when they are on the draw).

Now, taking this for granted, my dear madam, and seeing that there are so many handsome cowboys, ranchmen, and settlers of every description all sighing to join those innumerable caravans that move onward to the pale realms of the Divorce Courts, I would advise you to come out here at once,

and if you do not hanker after a cowboy, or a ranchman, probably you will get a *settle-her*.

I am not a marrying man myself, you know. My celibacy has almost become chronic. I believe that nothing short of a matrimonial epidemic would sweep me away from the ranks of the buttonless brigade. Still, for all that, were a large consignment of the fair sex to arrive in this country I might be persuaded to put my neck in the matrimonial noose—just a little bit at first to see how I could stand it; and if I liked it probably I would get married another little bit, and rise by degrees into a full-fledged married man, same as they do in the Masonic lodges. Now, I hope you will consider this matter seriously. If you prevail on some of your lady friends to join you in a grand female emigration scheme, you will earn the undying gratitude of thousands of your fellow-opposites, including yours truly.

AT THE ART EXHIBITION.

"Are you going on the rampage again, M'Phun?" growled my landlady the other day while I was busy making the necessary arrangements preparatory to setting out to visit that extensive picture shop that has just been opened in the town. "Some people are always flaunting about town in their purple and fine linen, while I, a poor hard-working, lone widow woman, am unable to get my foot out of

doors." "Could you not get it out by the window?" I suggested, eyeing with curiosity her stupendous understandings. The cat was suddenly ejected from its snug holding on the hearth-rug by her foot, and it was from this circumstance, and a knowledge that she can wield a facile tongue when occasion requires, that I made a hasty exit.

Immediately on entering the exhibition, my eye was enchained by the gorgeous display of paintings ranged before me, representing nearly every brush, palette knife, and thumb in the United Kingdom. While standing feasting my eyes on a large picture entitled "The Gloom of Glenogie," if I mistake not, a tall, lean, lank, or to use a Scotch expression, toom-lukin' individual, with a barricade of white shirt erected before him, and a single-barrelled observatory perched on one of his prominent cheek bones, came up and, touching me lightly on the shoulder, observed, "Looks like one of Raphael's, don't it?" "Perhaps it may have been *won at a raffle* for aught I know," I returned carelessly. "I beg your pardon," he said, "you misunderstand me; I mean Raphael the old master painter." "I am not aware whether Raffle, as you call him, was a master painter or whether he was on by the day's wage," I continued. "Bless me, how dense is his ignorance!" he muttered, half aloud, then returning to the attack said, in unmistakable tones of petulance, "Sir, are you acquainted with any of Turner's works?" "I should be," I returned, with a confident air, "for I had a brother once who used to turn brush handles

and pot-sticks for all the neighbours in our vicinity." "Bah!" he retorted, and disappeared among the crowd.

Perhaps the most interesting picture in the exhibition is one I am about to describe. Foreground, rustic maiden with milking-pail in one hand and the other gently resting on a mahogany-coloured-looking structure which ought to have been labelled "cow"; feeling of a village in the distance with smoke rising gently therefrom, while all the landscape is steeped in a flood of mellow, golden light from the rays of a beautiful bath brick sun, just perched above the horizon. This picture will compare favourably with others of a somewhat similar nature.

Another which calls for special mention represents a long, low-lying stretch of bare moorland, with hills in the distance. The feeling of still, sad repose pervading this picture is gently and judiciously relieved by a herd of beautifully japanned cattle in the foreground, lazily browsing on old used-up boots and empty corn beef cans, the delicate tints of the latter being in fine harmony with the fresh rich colouring of the artist's monogram in the immediate foreground. This picture has been deservedly hung on the Equator.

A picture, by an artist as yet unknown to fame, conveys to the mind of the observer an old ruined baronial pile, rearing its lofty head against a pea-green sky, the strong pipe-clay lights and lamp-black shadows of which give to the surrounding landscape a peculiarly weird and effective aspect. In gazing

upon this work of art I do not feel as if I were carried away back into old mediæval times, when every man's hand was against every other man's, and might was right. Oh, no; I guess I don't. On the contrary, I feel as if I would like to enter into negotiations with the Hanging Committee for the artist's suspension.

There are several meritorious pieces, contributed by our local artists, which are above criticism by anyone who has not brought a ladder with him. On returning home, my landlady inquired if I had brought a picture with me. "No, madam," I returned, "I have brought nothing with me but an empty frame; it is for you to produce the picture." She brought forth a palatable picture of roast beef and potatoes, so I sat down and fitted it into my frame

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OUR EXCURSION.

Saturday last being the anniversary of the 5th of July, the employees of Mr Peter M'Phun & Coy. (Limited), Ice Cream Purveyors, Fizzing Drink Manufacturers, and extensive Green Pea Importers, along with their wives, sweethearts, and landladies, numbering in all nearly over nine persons, had their annual day's outing in well-equipped donkey carts, drawn by splendid Jerusalem greys. All expenses

were kindly defrayed by the genial employees, which reflects great credit on their magnanimity and goodness of heart.

The spot chosen this year was the Town's Bleaching Green, that quiet sylvan retreat being kindly thrown open for their accommodation by the Provost and Magistrates of the town. Their route lay along the banks of the Marnock, *via* Waterside and Sandbed Streets. Many were the expressions of wonder and admiration that escaped the lips of the excursionists as they passed through the delightful scenery that abounds therein.

The weather clerk, who, previous to starting, had been threatening an action of damages, suddenly assumed a change of front, and Old Sol came out in all his glory, imparting new life and vigour into everything animate. The bird, the bee, and the book canvasser were on the wing. Away up in the downy cloud the lark was piping his lay in a style that brought forth the plaudits of all his feathered compeers; while the gas stokers were laying their pipes in a style that brought forth the choicest profanity of the whole company.

To our right rippled the malaria-laden waters of the classic Marnock, bearing aloft upon its bosom the white chalky foam of many a goodly peck of chloride of lime and other matters as it went fizzing, seething, and tumbling onwards on its way to join the sea. To our left stood a big, burly policeman, with a terra-cotta nose, leaning pensively up against a lamp-post; while far away, as far as one could smell,

there came wafted onwards to the enraptured nose the delicious aroma of fried fresh herrings, which made one inwardly thankful that he was born hollow. It was indeed delightful.

Every one was in his element. Nothing occurred to mar the harmony of the outward journey till we arrived at the gates that lead into the enclosure, when a mischievous little imp of a boy hurled a stone at the occupants of the first cart with such unerring precision that it hit my landlady on the end that she puts her bonnet on, and knocked down all her back hair. That interesting woman immediately seized the delinquent, and, after talking to him in quite a motherly way for some time, laid him across her knee in an inverted position and waved aloft her palm of victory. Then she let him go a sorer, if not a wiser, boy.

We secured a nice, green, grassy spot beneath the umbrageous shade of a line full of clothes, and though hampered in our movements thither, by the provisions we carried, we immediately set about having a picnic on a scale of excellence I believe never exceeded before. It was a feast for the gods; but as the gods had not put in an appearance, and as there was not any likelihood of their doing so, the genial head of the firm, who is not altogether the graceless fellow you would expect, gave the signal for the upholstery operations to begin. Soon pease-meal dumplings, oatmeal puddings, scarlet herrings, treacle sandwiches, pork handles, tripe cutlets, effervescing buttermilk, bramble wine, whisky soup,

and a host of various other eatables and drinkables, too numerous to mention, vanished as if by magic from the festive linen.

The *debris* having been removed, speechifying now became the order of the day. My health having been proposed, seconded, and carried without a dissentient voice, I got to my feet and expressed myself somewhat as follows:—

"Friends and fellow-labourers in the vineyard, when I look around on this vast assemblage of broad-minded and intelligent workmen, and feel, as I do, that I have got their entire sympathy and hearty co-operation in the management of the affairs of M'Phun & Coy., Limited (a firm which supplies the best possible article at the cheapest possible rate; no discount allowed)—I say, when I look around upon your intelligent faces and feel in the position just alluded to, a glow of pleasure suddenly permeates my whole being, from the sole of my foot away right up to the crown of my head. I am filled with—ah—ah—that is, I am filled with—with——" "Rhubarb tairts," suggested the boy who turns the refrigerator in the ice cream department of the business, which ill-timed remark came very near upsetting me altogether.

However, I sufficiently managed to maintain my equilibrium as to go back and begin my subject anew: "Gentlemen, when I look upon your intelligent foreheads, and feel that you are with me, my being thrills with delight, and I am filled with—with—yes, gentlemen, I am filled with——"

"Wind," ventured my landlady quite innocently, in her endeavour to help me out with it, but which had the effect of disconcerting me still more. And I was just grappling and groping around in blind despair for some adjective to hinge my remarks on, when some one kindly came to the rescue with "a yearning desire." "Yes, gentlemen, that's it," I continued; "I am filled with a yearning desire to extend to you the right hand of fellowship." (Hear, hear, from the superintendent of the fizzing drink department.) "Gentlemen, the great Napoleon Buonaparte—an extensive dealer himself, and one who did a quiet family business in continents—has dubbed us as a nation of shopkeepers, but he forgot to add that it is commerce—glorious commerce—that is the backbone of a nation.

"To show that we have contributed not a little to that backbone I may just refer you to the returns in connection with our business for the week ending 26th of May, which shows a marked increase over that of the same period of all previous years. In fact, so great has become the demand for our special kind of goods (terms, cash) that in order to meet the wants of our customers we are compelled to advertise a gigantic alteration scheme—the extensions to consist of a complete gutting out of the till drawer, extensive white-washing operations, with the addition of several bricks to the fireplace.

The plans are already in the hands of an eminent architect, and I have no doubt, gentlemen, when the alterations are completed, that with a long

pull, a strong pull, and a steady pull, we will be able to make the name of the "Green Pea Emporium" a name to be conjured with in the future as it has been in the past (special advantages for the term trade). So with these few remarks, gentlemen, and thanking you for the patient and attentive hearing afforded me, I will now resume my normal position."

The excitement that followed was intense. As the reporter who was present put it, "One wild, long, jubilant shout of approval suddenly tore the air in several places, and was wafted onward among the clothes poles, echoing and re-echoing among the hills and glens, till it gradually became lost in the distance; while the waving of hats, umbrellas, and handkerchiefs was a sight only to be witnessed outside the walls of a blind asylum." After this we dispersed, each to amuse himself in the way best suited to his taste, till the time arrived for returning.

It was on our homeward journey that a little incident transpired which, even now, brings the blush to my cheek as I chronicle the event. We were just jogging along Duke Street in a quite orderly way, never dreaming of anything out of the usual, when lo! before I was aware of his intentions, the silver-grey charger I was driving dragged us right into the centre of a group of Salvationists; all my efforts to turn him in another direction proving futile. The leader of the band was just giving out the words, "Come, brethren, all with one accord lift up your voices and sing," when, whether through sheer mischief, or probably accepting the invitation

in the spirit in which it was given, that all-fired brute let forth such a roar that my landlady dropped off in a faint. I never was so insulted in my life. I did not know what to do. I was at my wits' end when a policeman kindly came and took us in tow, and we arrived home not much the worse of the adventure.

SCRAPS FROM MY PORTFOLIO.

The Rev. Mr M., calling on one of his parishioners the other day, found the poor fellow in great tribulation. On asking the cause of his anguish he was informed that he had lost one of his few friends. "You should not give way to such violent outbursts of grief," interposed Mr M.; "you know we are all of us liable to bereavements; and what is your loss may be your friend's gain." "That's what's the matter," sobbed the poor fellow; "if it had not been his gain I would not have minded it so much, but to lose a half-sovereign on a football match is too much of a bereavement for me." Mr M. was dumb.

Said the master—"First boy in the class, stand up. What are the emblems of England, Ireland, and Scotland?" "The Rose, Shamrock, and Thistle, sir." "Correct. Second boy, stand up. Who would fight for the Rose?" "An Englishman, sir." "Correct. Third boy, stand up. Who would fight for the Shamrock?" "An Irishman, sir." "Correct. Next boy. Who would fight for the Thistle?" "*Bauldie M'Craw's cuddie, sir.*"

The other day a book canvasser called on us and began dilating at great length on the merits of one of the latest editions of Burns's poems. Wishing to get rid of him, we handed him a chair, the sole occupant of which was a brass pin with its point in the ascendency. "This edition," he continued, preparing to sit down, "is one of the most complete that has hitherto been published. It contains all the songs, poems, and letters of the gifted Bard, in conjuction with a glossary and a biography of his life, by—Earthquakes and Volcanoes!" he shrieked, as he vaulted wildly into the air, and tore out of the house with fashionable profanity on his brazen tongue, and the brazen pin in his anatomy.

There is a piece of orange peel lying on the pavement. "Nothing strange in that," you will probably observe. A little later on, one of those Italian dealers in busts, with a board of Wellingtons and Shakespeares on his head, comes sauntering carelessly along, humming to himself the songs of his fatherland. Probably he may have been thinking on the gay senoritas he used to flirt with in the sunny springtime of his life, or of that dear old homestead far away in the sunny south. At least 'twas evident by his face that his mind was ruminating on some pleasant reminiscences of bygone days. But man is the creature of fate. He knows not what a day or an hour may bring forth. On reaching the vicinity of the treacherous peel—he coolly kicked it into the gutter and passed on.

"Are you fond of the drama?" inquired an old gentleman of Pate M'Phun, one night in the pit of the theatre. "I am," replied Pate, "especially if it's a dram o' something guid." "Right you are," he said. "I am fond of spirits myself, and I know they are recommended by the faculty." "Yes," returned Pate, "but, if taken in too large doses, the faculties will rebel."

"I asked for bread and you gave me a stone," said a beggar to me one day at the door. "Great goodness, what more do you expect? Do you expect me to supply you with a hundredweight or two?" said I, slamming the door in his face.

First bairn—"I say, Jock, wull ye let me play wi' ye?" *Second bairn*—"No, I'll no. Ye aye stick the gemm." *First ditto*—"Well, if ye don't let me play wi' ye, your cat'll no get rinnin' thro' oor entry." *Second ditto*—"If you don't let oor cat thro' your entry, ye'll no get tearin' your breeks on the sneck o' oor door."

"Were you at the picnic the other day?" said a friend to Mike. "I was," replied Mike, "and, troth, tho' I didn't see much of the pick, be jabers I got the 'nick' all right."

We understand that a gentleman in town has in his possession a hole from a pair of trousers worn by Burns when a boy, and that he has entered into negotiations with the Kilmarnock Burns Museum

Committee with the view of having it placed among the relics of the Poet.

My landlady, extending her hand, said, in a melting tone of voice, "Farewell, M'Phun, remember me." The servant girl, who cleans my boots, in the same kind of melting tone, begged me to remember her also.

Whit is the difference between a steam engine and a weel kent posting-maister? The ane has sae monie horse poo'er; the ither sae monie poor horse.

An old gentleman, whose nose was twisted a little to one side, was giving a small boy directions to a certain place, and ended by telling him to follow his nose and he wouldn't go wrong. "By jing," said the boy, "were you to follow yours, you would get dizzy."

"Why don't you call round some night?" inquired an old acquaintance of me the other day. "Just ask anyone for Robert K—— and you are sure to find me out." "Don't you think if I was to call with that little account that is still standing, I would be more certain to find you out?" I replied, with a look full of meaning.

A young man, very badly marked with smallpox, boasted in our hearing that Mr Stevenson, the sculptor, had taken a model of his head for his statue of the poet Burns. "Freen," observed an admirer

of the poet, "it's mair likely that Allcock took a model of your face for his porous plaister."

What is the difference between "The Ossington Coffee House" and a small boy's mouth? The one is a Coffee Tavern; the other is a Toffie Cavern.

"I shall report you for entering a train while in motion," observed an official to Pate M'Phun one morning at the railway station. "Great goodness!" returned Pate, "how do you expect me to enter a train without being in motion?"

"I am one who has made a considerable noise in the world," said a consequential looking fellow to Pate M'Phun one night in the Bickering Bush. Donkeys *do* make a considerable noise in the world," replied Pate.

One morning my landlady charged me with having been in a state of intoxication the night before because I had left my clothes lying on the hearth-rug. There may be some truth in this assertion, as I was inside the clothes.

"We women buddies will jist gang oot o' the kintry and get wed, if this Bill for the mairrage o' a deceased wife's sister doesna pass," said M'Phun's landlady to the humorist one day. "A very good thing it would be for the community were you women bodies wed out of the country," he replied, sarcastically.

A little boy came running home from school one day crying, "O, mither, d'ye ken, Jock Tamson, the miller was gotten lying in his bed this morning deid." "Deid!" gasped his mother. "Aye deid—drunk," added the boy. It looked like a deid heat between him and the hearth brush as they went out at the door.

"I have always found the rearing of horses profitable," observed a posting-master to M'Phun one day as he led out an animal for that worthy's inspection. Said animal immediately rose on its hind legs and hit its owner such a rap on the head with one of its hoofs that he was obliged to sit down in the gutter. "I guess you didn't find the rearing of that one a profitable business," remarked Pate, with a twinkle in his eye.

A tramp came up to Pate M'Phun one day and accosted him with, "I say, mister, yez couldn't oblige me with a bit of tobacco." "That's a lie, I could," returned Pate, passing on, much to the disgust of the tramp, who was soon exploring the gutter in search of a brick.

"Our train run over a poor old deaf and dumb woman to-night at Kilmarnock Station," I observed to my landlady one evening on coming home from my holidays. "Bless me. Goodness gracious! How did it happen?" she inquired. "O, she was standing under the railway arch when it run over her," I replied.

Returning from Bogside, a young man was dilating on the merits of a horse race he had just witnessed. "Would you believe it, Mr M'Phun," he exclaimed in rapture, "there was only a head between the three first horses." "Great guns!" exclaimed Pate, "then two of them must have been running without heads."

"Two to (hic) one, bar (hic) one!" shouted Pate M'Phun one night at the door of his lodgings. "Two to one bar the door and come awa' to your bed, ye gibbering idiot," called his landlady from beneath the bedclothes.

"That's my pal, and I won't allow you, or any other man, to insult him," said a young man to Pate M'Phun one Hogmanay night at the Cross. "Then take him away," returned Pate, "or you will be under the painful necessity of acting as pall-bearer in a lugubrious and mournful procession."

I found several human finger nails in the last tin of corned beef I purchased. Some one ought to be prosecuted. I think it should be my landlady—her fingers were attached to them.

"One of our most popular preachers has suddenly left town with a married woman," I observed, with an air of great secrecy, to my landlady one evening. "O, the shameless hussy! Who is the married woman?" she eagerly inquired. "His own wife," I *quietly* replied.

M'Phun's condition this morning is considerably improved; he is able to sit up occasionally and abuse his landlady.

"Are you going to take me in?" inquired a youth of Pate M'Phun one day at the entrance to a football field. "If you believe that I am going to pay for you," replied Pate, "you *will* be taken in."

What is the difference between a sniff of fire and brimstone and a sniff of the Kilmarnock water? The one is a smell of a devil, and the other is a devil of a smell.

A Yankee doctor has just discovered that it is unhealthy to work between meals.

"Madam," I observed to an old woman one evening at a Burns concert, "probably you are not aware that Robert Burns was a man born before his time." "I haena muckle broos," she said, "o' them wha are born afore their time. In a' my experience, them wha are born at the usual time are aye the healthiest."

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